THE

PRACTICAL WORKS

OF THE

REV. RALPH ERSKINE, *A. M.*

CONSISTING OF HIS

SERMONS AND POEMS.

IN TEN LARGE VOLUMES OCTAVO.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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THE

SERMONS,

AND OTHER

PRACTICAL WORKS,

Of the Late REVEREND and LEARNED

MR. RALPH ERSKINE,

Miniſter of the Goſpel in DUNFERMLINE.

CONSISTING OF

Above One Hundred and Fifty SERMONS, beſides his POETICAL PIECES.

IN TEN LARGE VOLUMES OCTAVO.

To which is prefixed,

An ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR'S LIFE and WRITINGS, with an ELAGIAC POEM and large CONTENTS.

Mark the perfect Man, and behold the upright; for the End of that Man is Peace. PSALM XXXVII. 37.

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SERMON XVIII*.

PREVENTING LOVE; or, GOD's Love to us the *Cauſe* of our Love to him.

1 JOHN iv. 19.

We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.

THE great deſign of the goſpel, goſpel-ordinances, and ſacraments, is to commend the love of God in Chriſt. The ſacrament of the ſupper is a love-feaſt; and they that have their ſenſes ſpiritually exerciſed therein, will find readily all their ſenſes filled with *love*. What do they *hear*, but *love!* What do they *ſee*, but *love!* What do they *taſte*, but *love!* What do they *feel*, but *love!* What do they *ſmell*, but *love!*—It is a ſweet account we have of God, ver. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us.* O happy they that have ſo learned the goſpel-catechiſm, from their experience, as to be able to anſwer to that queſtion, *What is God?* And to ſay, *God is love!* He is eſſential, boundleſs, bottomleſs, infinite *love*. It is true, if we look to him in the glaſs of the *law*, we will ſee him to be all *wrath; a conſuming fire out of Chriſt;* but look to him in the glaſs of the *goſpel*, and you will ſee him

* This ſermon was preached after the adminiſtration of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper at Portmoak, June 3d, 1723. and hath now undergone five impreſſions.

all love; a God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf: and the ſight thereof produces love: for *we love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.*

The text gives us a ſhort account of the whole buſineſs betwixt God and a believer: they love one another. Here is love deſcending, God in Chriſt loving his ſaints; and here is love aſcending, the ſaints in Chriſt loving God; and the former begetting the latter. When love hath deſcended from heaven to earth, it hath finiſhed the half of its courſe; but when it aſcends from earth to heaven again, then the circle is completed.

Here is, 1. A deſcription of *God's love*; *he loved us firſt.* 2. A deſcription of *our love* to God; we love him for *this cauſe.* And,

1. We have *God's* love *deſcribed; He* FIRST *loved us.* If we were to make a critical diviſion, we might notice how it is deſcribed. 1. In the *act*, loved. O wonder that ever the heart of God ſhould have acted that way towards any ſinner of Adam's race. 2. The *ſubject* loving; *He loved:* O! a glorious *He*, the infinitely holy and juſt God. 3. The *object* loved; *He loved Us*; poor wretched apoſtate *us.* 4. The *quality* of this love, he loved *us*, and *firſt* loved *us*; intimating, both that it is an *ancient* love, for it is in the preterite time, he *loved;* yea, loved from eternity; and alſo that it is *antecedent love*; *he* FIRST *loved us*, before we had a being, before we were capable to love him; yea, while we were yet enemies.

2. We have the *ſaints* love deſcribed; *we loved him, becauſe he loved us;* which is alſo deſcribed in theſe four: 1. The *act*, *love;* and indeed this love of ours is but a drop of the ocean of his love. 2. The *ſubject* loving, *we*; we believers, we that got a taſte of his love. 3. The *object* beloved, *him;* we love *him*, who deſerves our love above all things in heaven and earth. 4. The *riſe* and *ſource* of this love of ours, *We love him, becauſe he* FIRST *loved us;* his love is the incentive and productive cauſe of our love. But I refer the further explication of the text to the proſecution

ſecution of a doctrine. Many things might here be obſerved: As,

1*ſt*, *None can truly love God, but ſuch as are beloved of him*, Many ſpeak of the love of God, as if it were natural to them: but as true love is a ſpark of heavenly fire: ſo there is no love natural to man but the love of ſin.

2*dly*, *That God hath a people in the world that love him, becauſe they are loved of him.* There is in God a common love, whereby he loved the whole world; and a ſpecial love, whereby he loves the ſaints: and ſo there is in the ſaints a common love, by which they love all God's creatures; and a peculiar love that belongs to God only, whom they prize above all other things.

3*dly*, *That divine love works freely.* God does not trade with us upon any terms, conditions, or valuable conſiderations in and about us. We can neither buy heaven nor beg it; it muſt be given. Let not the greateſt civilian preſume; let not the greateſt prodigal deſpair: God's love is firſt on the field.

4*thly*, *That as God and his ſaints love one another, ſo the reaſon of ſaints loving God, is God's loving them*: there is no reaſon of *God's* love, but becauſe he loves. But there is reaſon enough for *our* love, becauſe *he* loved us. The believer loves God upon God's account, and for good reaſon; God loves us without any reaſon, or any cauſe from without himſelf; but we have all the reaſon in the world, why we ſhould love God. Many ſay, they love Chriſt, but they have not any reaſon for it; they that love him know why they do ſo. There are three things create love, *viz. Beauty, intereſt, love.* 1. *Beauty;* and O, but Chriſt is *white and ruddy, and altogether lovely.* 2. *Intereſt;* the more a man ſees Chriſt to be his own, the more he loves him. 3. *Love*; the love of God is the great parent of love; it begets love; *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.*——But having taken this ſhort view of the text, the doctrine I fix upon is this.

OBSERV. *God's love to his people is the ſource of their love to him.* Their love is influenced by the faith of his love; his love is the cauſe of theirs; *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.*

Now the general method that ſeems moſt native is,

I. To ſpeak of *God's love* to his people.
II. Of the *ſaints love* to God.
III. The *influence* his love hath upon theirs as the cauſe of it.
IV. Apply the whole in ſundry *uſes.*

I. To ſpeak of *God's love to his people:* and indeed to ſpeak of it is to ſpeak of that which is unſpeakable and inconceivable, for *it paſſeth knowledge*; only we may notice a few things that the ſcripture ſays of this love. I would offer ſome *remarks* concerning this love of God; and then ſhew more particularly, the *import* of this expreſſion, *He firſt loved us.*

1ſt, I would offer ſome *remarks* concerning the love of God.

Remark 1. *That the* fountain *of this love is* GOD *the Father.* Love begins in order of nature with the Father; hence, ſays Chriſt, *I will not ſay, that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himſelf loveth you*, John xvi. 26. Chriſt prays for all the fruits and emanations of the Father's love to his people; but not for the Father's love itſelf. You miſtake greatly, Sirs, if you do think that Chriſt doth purchaſe and pray for the Father's love to his people; nay, it was the Father's love that ſent Chriſt to purchaſe all the fruits and communications of his love. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.* The love of God cannot be purchaſed; there is no need of any mediation here; *I will not ſay, that I will pray the Father*, in this reſpect, *for the Father loves you.* Here is the fountain of the love. But,

Remark 2. *That the* channel *through which the love of God does run, from this fountain, is the* LORD JESUS CHRIST. God's love does not vent itſelf towards any ſinner, to the diſparagement of his infinite holineſs and juſtice;

juſtice; and therefore it vents and flows in and thro' Chriſt, *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs, for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt*, Romans iii. 23. God hath taken a marvellous way to manifeſt his love: when he would ſhew his *power*, he makes a world; when he would ſhew his *wiſdom*, he puts it in a frame and form that diſcovered vaſt wiſdom; when he would manifeſt the *grandeur* and *glory* of his *name* more, he makes a heaven, and puts angels, arch-angels, principalities, and powers therein; and when he will manifeſt *love*, what will he not do? It is a pity we ſhould deny this love; becauſe God hath taken ſuch a great and myſterious way of manifeſting it in Chriſt; his *death*, his *blood*, his *righteouſneſs*; here is the channel.

Remark 3. *The* ſtreams *of divine love that flow from this fountain, in this channel, are* vaſtly great; *viz.* Pardon, peace, ſafety, adoption, juſtification, ſanctification, audience of prayer, a bleſſing on all providences, and everlaſting triumph in heaven. I cannot enlarge upon theſe, or any other of the ſtreams that flow from this love of God; the ſtreams are ſo many, ſo great, that we ſhould loſe ourſelves there, as well as in the fountain, if we were to dive thereinto; only we are *bleſſed in Chriſt with all ſpiritual bleſſings*; and this love of God, and all the fruits of it, is to be enjoyed in the *fellowſhip of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. xiii. 13.; where we read of *the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the love of God*, and *the communion of the Spirit*; where Chriſt is firſt mentioned, becauſe he is next to us, as being the channel through which the love of God is vented; and this love of God, and grace of Chriſt, is enjoyed in the communion and fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt; and that this love is from the Father, as the fountain; in the Son, as the channel; by the Holy Ghoſt, as the immediate conveyance.

Remark 4. *The* veſſels *into which theſe ſtreams are vented, or this love is poured, are* ſinners; even to them it is declared that he is the Lord, *The Lord God merciful, and gracious, pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and*

and ſin; and that *God is love*. This *motto*, that *God is love*, is inſcribed on the gates of *heaven*; and none will think ſtrange of that, becauſe the love of God, in bringing any ſinner of Adam's race there, is manifeſted to the higheſt. But we would think ſtrange, if one ſhould ſay, that this is even the inſcription written upon the gates of *hell*, that *God is love*; why? his love to himſelf, and his own juſtice, is manifeſted there; yea, not only ſo, but millions are damned, becauſe they ſlight redeeming-love; and their conſcience galls them, for contemning all the offers of love. But that which concerns us eſpecially, is, that we may read this inſcription daily upon the beautiful gate of the *temple*; I mean, in goſpel-ordinances, that *God is love*; for therein he manifeſts his love to ſinners, even to ſinners of Adam's family, in the general diſpenſation of the goſpel; and particularly to the veſſels of mercy, in the ſpecial operation of the Spirit upon them in the fulneſs of time; wherein he hath deſigned to pour out his Spirit, and ſo to pour in his love. But to omit many things here, I come,

2*dly*, To ſhew the particular *import* of this expreſſion, *He firſt loved us*. And,

1. It ſays, That his love is *eternal* love, and from everlaſting: *He firſt loved us. I have loved thee with an everlaſting love*, Jer. xiii. 3.; as it is to everlaſting, ſo it is from everlaſting; as it will never have an end, ſo it never had a beginning, but it is as antient as the eternal God is. O! what an amazing thought is this, that God ſhould have had thoughts of love towards any poor ſinners, like you and me, from the beginning of his *being*, which is without a beginning!——But, to prevent miſtakes, you would know that the love of God is twofold; his love of *deſtination*, and his love of *approbation*: his love of deſtination and purpoſe, whereby he is ſaid *to have choſen us in Chriſt, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy*; *having predeſtinate us to the adoption of children*, Eph. i. 4, 5.; and this love he is ſaid to manifeſt even before a man's converſion, 1 John iv. 9. *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards*

towards us, becauſe God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be a propitiation for our ſin.——Again, there is his love of *approbation* and friendſhip: ſuch as that ſpoken of, John xiv. 23. *If a man love me, and keep my words, my Father will love him; and we will come to him, and make our abode with him.* Now, the object of the former love, *to wit*, the love of *deſtination*, is every *elect ſoul*, and that from all eternity, as well as in time, even before their converſion and union to Chriſt; the object of the latter, *to wit*, his love of *approbation* and friendſhip, is every believer united to Chriſt, to whom he begins to manifeſt his everlaſting love perſonally; for, though he loved and approved of them from eternity in Chriſt, yet they cannot be ſaid to be actually loved and approved in their own perſons, till once their perſons are united to Chriſt. Though God's love be everlaſting and immutable as himſelf is, yet there is a time wherein he begins to manifeſt his love: there is no *variation or ſhadow of turning in God's love*; all the change is in the perſon beloved, not in God. It is mere blaſphemy to ſay, that God begins to love them whom before he hated, in a proper and ſtrict ſenſe. It is true, the elect are *children of wrath, even as others*, by nature, whatever they are by divine deſtination, being ever the object of God's love in this ſenſe; yet in ſome ſenſe, he begins to love them, in reſpect of the *manifeſting* of his love to them, and the outletting of his love upon them; when his love is taken, not ſo much for his immanent act, as for his tranſient act, not for any thing in himſelf, but for what flows from him to them; the love that is in himſelf is ſtill the ſame, but the acts of love that flow forth to them, theſe begin to appear, when he *manifeſts himſelf to them, as he does not to the world*; when he comes to them for their ſalvation, and *reveals his Son in them:* and here alſo he is ſtill before-hand with them; *He firſt loved us.*

2. *He firſt loved us*; it ſays, that his love is *antecedent*

cedent love; as it is firſt in point of time, yea, from all eternity, ſo it is firſt in point of order of time. We cannot manifeſt our love to him, till firſt he manifeſt his love to us. Men may feign love to God and Chriſt, before they know any thing of God's love in Chriſt towards them, but they truly have no love to him; even the elect themſelves have no love to him by nature, they are *enemies*, and *without God, and without Chriſt in the world*; buried in the grave of ſin and corruption even as others; *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, and ſlaves to *divers luſts*; the devil dwelling in them, working in them, reigning in them, as a man dwells in his houſe, or works in his ſhop, or reigns upon his throne; they have no more acquaintance with him, or love to him, than others, till by grace they be regenerated, and made to come to God in Chriſt, and be raiſed up to a new and lively hope. Common favours indeed, they may have, and God is always ſure to notice his elect, and to have a care of them; and many remarkable deliverances will they meet with, even while unconverted. You will find few gracious perſons but they will have even good things to tell of the Lord's kindneſs to them in their youth; but yet love and hatred cannot be known by theſe things that are ſeen; for bad men have had the like deliverances, and manifold common mercies, and common grace perhaps alſo; but all this while they are ſtrangers to true love to God, till once ſome rays of his everlaſting love go before them, and make way for the breaking of their enmity, and engaging them to love him.

3. *He firſt loved us*; it ſays, that his love is abſolutely *free* love. If *he firſt loved us*, before we have any love to him, or lovelineſs in us, O how free is it! His love is free in ſeveral reſpects. It is free love in that it is without *force* or *conſtraint*; we muſt even put ourſelves in his reverence, and not think to compel God, as if he could be obliged to do it; nay, if we get any thing, we muſt be in grace's debt, and ly at grace's door, as poor beggars, for an alms for Chriſt's ſake.——It is free love in that it is *without*

reluc-

reluctancy; it is with all his heart. There are ſome objects come to our door, and though we give them alms, yet it is with ſome reluctancy; we are not ſo free-hearted towards them as to others whom we have a kindneſs for; theſe we will give to, with all our heart; we give them with as much pleaſure as if we were getting to ourſelves; ſo God's ſpecial gifts are given with all his heart; he takes pleaſure in giving; he *delights in ſhewing mercy*.—It is free love, in that it is without *merit* and *motive*; his love is neither deſired nor deſerved, and yet he loves: *I will love them freely*: I will do it undeſervedly, even while they deſerve to be thruſt down to the loweſt hell; *Not for your ſakes do I this, be it known unto you*.—It is free love, in that it is without *price*; he ſeeks nothing for what he gives, he takes nothing for it; nay, he deals with us as poor beggars that have nothing to offer for what he gives, and nothing wherewith to recompence his kindneſs, after he hath given.—It is free in oppoſition to all proper *terms* and *conditions*. Papiſts tell us of the merit of *congruity*, and the merit of *condignity*; and many ignorant proteſtants think they do enough when they exclude the word *merit*, but in the room of merit they bring in a world of *conditions*; and tell us, upon *condition* you do ſo and ſo, then God will do this and that to you; telling us, God hath made a covenant with us, not like the covenant of works, but upon eaſier terms, requiring only ſome little things accommodated to our weakneſs: "It cannot be called *merit*, "ſay they, for there is no proportion betwixt what we "do, and what we get; it is, ſay they, but as if one "ſhould hold out a penny, and get a kingdom for it." Many ſuch ſubtile reaſonings of men there are, that tend to exalt ſelf, and ſelf-righteouſneſs, which would all evaniſh before the light of this very text, if viewed in a ſpiritual and evangelical manner. *He firſt loved us*.

4. *He firſt loved us*; it ſays, that his love is a *preventing* love; it prevents our love, and all the good that can be about us; for he prevents with the bleſſings of his goodneſs. I might here illuſtrate this by

ſhewing, 1. The *object* of his love, whom he prevents. 2. The *time* of his love, when he prevents them. 3. The *dawning* of his love upon them, whereby he prevents them. 4. The *fruits* and *effects* of his love in them, wherein he prevents them.

(1.) The *object* of his love, whom he prevents. If we view whom he loves, we cannot but ſee it to be preventing love. The love of God lighted upon fallen men, not fallen angels, though much more noble and ſpiritual beings; and why? even *becauſe he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy:* his love falleth upon the poor, fooliſh, weak nothings of this world for ordinary; not upon the wiſe, noble, and mighty; *not many ſuch are called*; he reveals theſe things to *babes*, not to the *wiſe* and *prudent* of the world. We muſt not think, that outward things, ſuch as wiſdom, and learning, and worldly advantages, move God to ſet his love upon any; *Even ſo Father, for it ſeemed good in thy ſight:* yea, his love vents ordinarily upon the moſt ſtubborn and rebellious ſinners in the world, more than upon the moſt civil and moral perſons, that had led a better life than the generality of their neighbours; who have had more of the *righteouſneſs of the law* than other people; who have been better-natured, in reſpect of their pleaſant natural diſpoſition, than others; and who have had a liberal education, ſo as to be trained up, not only in manifold arts and ſciences, but in manifold religious duties from their childhood. Grace many times paſſes by ſuch perſons as theſe, and falls upon more knobby, rugged perſons. The young man in the goſpel may be put to ſay, *All theſe things have I done from my youth up*, and yet go away from Chriſt, when a bloody Manaſſes, and perſecuting Paul are received into favour and mercy. In a word, whomſoever he makes the object of his manifeſted love in time, they are perſons unworthy of his love; they are full of enmity againſt him, and bent to backſliding from him, and wofully averſe from returning to him. That God ſhould love ſinners, and great ſinners, O what preventing love is it!

(2.) The

(2.) The *time* of his love, when he prevents them, does alſo illuſtrate this. Many a time he makes his grace to reach them, not when they are in their beſt frame or mood; but behold a Paul going to Damaſcus, with the knife in his hand, ready to cut the throats of the ſaints; grace out-runs him, ſeizes him, lays hold upon him, and the love of a God in Chriſt overcomes him; he is made Chriſt's priſoner, vanquiſhed, and brought to ſubjection. I do not ſay, that it always holds, that a perſon gets the revelation of grace, when going on in ſin; but the firſt efflux of grace towards them is many times, when in a very bad caſe: the Lord arreſts them, many times, when they have been about ſome wicked act of ſin; the Lord will fall in at ſuch a time upon their conſcience, fill them with terror, and humble them under his mighty hand; and never leave them till he hath quickened them, and made them live; *When thou waſt in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, Live.* But what need we ſay more concerning the time of his love, to ſhow the preventing nature of it, than what God himſelf ſays, Rom. ix. 11. *Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated; the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth?* Before the man was born, or had done either good or evil, behold he is an object of divine love; *Jacob have I loved.*

(3.) The *dawning* of his love upon them, whereby he prevents them, may further illuſtrate this, *That he firſt loved us.* By this *dawning* of his love, I underſtand, not only the love and grace that is *objectively* diſplayed in the glorious goſpel; but eſpecially in the firſt glimmering of the *ſubjective* light, or the dawning of the day of power, wherein the perſon is made willing when the goſpel comes, *Not in word only, but in power*; when *he girds his ſword upon his thigh*, even his *glory* and his *majeſty*, as that word may be read, Pſal. xlv. 3. for the diſplay of the glory of his grace and love, is the ſword whereby he ſubdues and conquers his enemies: and till this *will-conquering day of power* take place, what is in the will but impotence and inſufficiency,

to think any thing as of ourſelves? and not only impotency, but averſion from every thing that is good; and not only averſion, but oppoſition and contrariety to the holy nature and will of God; *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* This *dawning* then of the day of power, to make them willing, muſt take place before there can be any gracious motion in the ſoul towards God; for all the legal conviction and humiliation that goes before this; works only from a principle of *ſelf-love*, and *ſelf-preſervation*, till this great maſter-faculty of the ſoul, the *will* being conquered, carry the reſt of the faculties of the ſoul towards God.

(4.) The *fruits* and *effects* of his love in them, wherein he prevents them. And here I will tell you ſome of theſe things that his love prevents, in regard that they are *fruits* of his love. And,

1. His love prevents our *holineſs*; for that is a fruit of his love. I hope you know that ſanctification and holineſs is a work of God's free grace, and ſo an effect of his free love; and yet, I fear, you bewray your ignorance of the goſpel in thinking, O muſt I not be holy before ever God love me? Muſt not a man be ſomewhat holy, and therefore God will love him, and give him more? O great ignorance to think ſo; *What haſt thou but what thou haſt received?* Is not the very firſt beginning of holineſs from God? Is it not he that infuſes the habit of grace, and *takes away the heart of ſtone, and gives the heart of fleſh*; and ſo his love prevents our habitual holineſs, and alſo our actual holineſs, and all our good works? Surely you may know this; for you have learned to ſay, that as it is by his free grace, that *we are renewed in the whole man, after the image of God*, ſo it is by the ſame free grace that we are enabled *more and more to die unto ſin, and live unto righteouſneſs.* If any good work, truly good, be wrought by you, is it not the fruit of God's creating power? *For we are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus, unto good works.*

2. His love prevents our *faith*; for that is a fruit of his love. You will ſay, it is true, he muſt make

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us holy, but muſt we not come to him for it? Is it not upon condition that we believe, that he loves us, and ſaves us? My dear friends, whence is it that we get faith? If ever we have any true faith, is it upon the account of foreſeen faith that God loves any man? that is rank Arminianiſm. Is it becauſe we had faith before? O! does faith come out of our own ſhop? Or, is it ſpun out of our own bowels, and forged upon our own anvil? Can we bring faith out of our own head or heart? Can *dry bones live*, or raiſe themſelves out of the grave? Nay, it is as impoſſible for us to believe, and raiſe ourſelves up to the life of faith, as it is for a carcaſe of clay to put life in itſelf; nay, is not faith the *gift of God?* Is not Chriſt the *author and finiſher of faith?* Who ſays, *When I am lifted up, I will draw all men to me?* It requires the ſame power that raiſed Chriſt from the dead. O then! Let not your imagination in this matter croſs the very firſt principles of religion, ſo as to think that your faith, if you have any, is the cauſe of *God's love*, while his love is the cauſe of your faith; *He firſt loved us.*

3. His love prevents our *repentance*; for that is a *fruit of his love:* Why, ſay you, muſt we not repent and reform, before God ſet his love upon us? And ought we not, by the exerciſe of our common gifts and abilities that God hath given us, to work up ourſelves to ſomething of this, in order to our obtaining the favour of God? Alas, for ſuch ignorance, and ſuch a goſpel-darkening religion, as is like to come in faſhion in this generation! O! is not repentance as much the *gift of God*, and fruit of his love, as any other graces and fruits of the Spirit? Acts v. 31. *Chriſt is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, by the right-hand of God, to give repentance to Iſrael, as well as remiſſion of ſin.* We have a great deal of noiſe made about the neceſſity of goſpel-repentance before, and in order to juſtification, and that even as a condition and qualification; here is indeed a *new ſcheme* of divinity, of which there is no foundation in our *ſtandards* of doctrine. It is true, *repentance* is ſo neceſſary, that none can expect pardon without it; and ſo ſay I, holineſs

lineſs and ſanctification are ſo neceſſary, that none can expect pardon without them: but is therefore holineſs and ſanctification neceſſary in order to juſtification? I think it is hard to maintain this without running to Rome, and making ſanctification before juſtification, and in order to it: for if actual goſpel-repentance be not a part of ſanctification, I know not what it is; yea, as deſcribed in our Catechiſm, it comprehends the whole of ſanctification.——But to return; why, may one ſay, may we not repent of our ſins, in ſome meaſure, and reform our lives, and humble ourſelves, and mourn? At leaſt, can we not ſhed a tear? Can we not leave off our tippling, and quit our luſts, and think upon death, judgment, and eternity, ſo as by the meditation of theſe we ſhall get ourſelves wrought up to a ſtrong and ſtrange mortification to all things in the world; yea, become as eminent in this as any ſaint in all the country, for all their boaſting? Well, much good may your repentance do you; and would to God that you were doing more than you do. But I would have you ſuſpect your repentance, yea, I tell you aſſuredly, that even by the utmoſt uſe of the higheſt common gifts and graces, you cannot repent; and when you have brought yourſelf by theſe means to the greateſt meaſure of legal repentance, yet there is no promiſe in all the Bible to that repentance; *For all the promiſes are yea, and amen, in Chriſt Jeſus;* and till you get in to Chriſt, by a *faith of his operation*, your common legal repentance is a ſinful repentance; *For whatſoever is not of faith, is ſin*; and ſo it is a God-diſpleaſing repentance: *For without faith, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* In a word, your repentance, which you ſo much magnify in your heart, for I ſuppoſe you are not ſo deſtitute of ſenſe, as to ſpeak thus before the world; this repentance, I ſay, is ſo far from diſpoſing you for Chriſt, that it tends effectually to make you oppoſe Chriſt; why? you find heart-melting and mourning, tears and ſorrows, great flaſhes and love-floods of affection, and then you think all is right; you ſee no more need of Chriſt, and come ſhort of him, inſtead of being drawn into him. "A man in this caſe, as

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" one fitly expreſſes it, is like one that comes to court " a lady; but having got a ſight of the handmaid, he " falls in love with her, courts her, and marries her, " who yet was but the perſon that ſhould have led him " to the lady, he was propoſing to match with: ſo " here, Chriſt is the match, the law and the duties " thereof are the handmaid; well, thou falls to duties, " ſorrowing for ſin, and the like; you have fallen in " love with that, and ſeek no further." Why, you will ſay, by this means you would have no preparatory work at all. It ſeems by this doctrine, ſay you, a man muſt come to Chriſt at the firſt leap, reeking out of his ſins, before his life be reformed; nay, Sirs, I muſt tell you, in the Lord's name, that the deſign of a right preparatory work, is to force you out of your feigned repentance and reformation, and out of your falſe hopes and confidence, and to ſweep away your refuge of lies: and if ever God prepare you for Chriſt, he will bring you to ſay, " O, I cannot repent, I can- " not reform, I cannot mourn; and give me a world " I cannot command a hearty ſigh, or a ſob for ſin; " I can do nothing; I am hard like a ſtone, and black " like a devil; and unleſs Chriſt help, I am utterly " and eternally undone." And this tends to give the ſoul a great demonſtration of the freedom of his love, that it prevents our repentance: *He firſt loved us.*

4. His love prevents our *prayers*; for that is alſo a fruit of his love. You will ſay, though we cannot attain to be holy, and cannot believe and repent, yet we muſt pray, and ſeek, or elſe we cannot get his favour and love. Wo is me that people ſhould have ſuch dark and dangerous notions of the method of ſalvation! Pray, whence comes your prayers, if they be worth the name of prayers? Do they not come from heaven, and from the *Spirit of grace and ſupplication?* If you have any deſires that are worth the naming, they come from above: and if they come wholly out of your heart, or head, they are not worth; yea, whatever deſire you have out of Chriſt, and whatever prayer is not put up on this altar, *the name of Chriſt Jeſus*, and by the help of the Spirit of Chriſt, there is no promiſe made to it: for, however ſeveral promiſes are made

made to God's ordinances and inſtitutions, which oblige you to be about his hand in the uſe of means: yet no promiſe is made to your performance out of Chriſt. Expect then no favour for, or upon the account of your duties; for if that be your way of doing, you need to pray that God may force you out of your prayers. Let none think now that I am diſcouraging any from the uſe of means, and the performance of duties; nay, I take witneſs, that, in God's name, I call you to the uſe thereof; and declare you are obliged thereto by the command and authority of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. But, in the ſame name, I call you to the right uſe of the means, the goſpel-uſe of the means; for that legal notion of praying and ſeeking, that I find for ordinary among people, as if their ſeeking would prevent God's love, and procure his favour, is derogatory to the goodneſs of God; and hath a tendency to make a Chriſt of their prayers, yea, more than a Chriſt; in regard it would be aſcribing a cauſality to our prayers, which is not even done to the merits of Chriſt in this matter: for, as I ſaid before, the love of God in itſelf, cannot be procured; Chriſt himſelf did not procure it; for God's love prevented Chriſt's miſſion, and ſent him to procure all that he did procure and purchaſe: and therefore, if you think your prayers will purchaſe God's love, you make more than a Chriſt of your prayers; and they are offenſive to God, diſhonouring to Chriſt, and prejudicial to your own ſouls. The ſaints themſelves know that it is not by their duties that they obtain his love; but in duty ſometimes they get a ſenſe of his love. Why, may ſome ſay, we need pray none at all, if we get no good by our prayers. Really, man, theſe prayers of yours, which you make your righteouſneſs, and for which you expect to be loved, and juſtified, and ſaved, they are the moſt abominable to God, and unprofitable to you, in the world. *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices? Therefore bring no more vain oblation: your incenſe is abomination to him; he cannot away with it, it is iniquity, even your ſolemn meeting*, Iſa. i. 11, 13. See Iſaiah lxvi. 3. Therefore you have need to pray, that

that God would learn you the myſtery of prayer; for you will never find it a pleaſant, comfortable, and profitable exerciſe, while you ſet it before his love, as a cauſe of it; whereas it follows after his love as a fruit of it. Hence all that ever prayed to purpoſe, or wreſtled with him for the bleſſing, have found that they could not pray, more than they could move the earth from its center, until his grace prevented their prayers; and they can all ſet their ſeal to that word, Iſa. lxv. 1. *I am found of them that ſought me not.* None ever ſought him aright, till free grace ſought them out, and found them in ſome reſpect.

Queſt. But is it not ſaid, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. *For theſe things will I be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael?* True, betwixt gracious ſeeking and finding, there is a certain connexion; for gracious and ſpiritual ſeeking preſuppoſes grace to ſeek, and that his love hath already prevented our prayers; and when he gives grace to ſeek, to be ſure he will give more and more, not for our ſeeking, but for the ſake of his promiſe in Chriſt Jeſus, and upon his account. But if we underſtand that word as an encouragement to all, whether gracious or graceleſs perſons, *For this will I be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael*, then the meaning is not, *I will give you none of theſe things*, to wit, *the new heart, the new ſpirit*, there promiſed, and *the Spirit to be put within you*; I ſay, the meaning is not, I will give you none of theſe things, but for the ſake of your prayers, and till your prayers produce them; nay, that expoſition would be croſs to the very context, which ſays, *Not for your ſake do I this, O houſe of Iſrael; be it known to you, and be aſhamed, and confounded for your own ways:* you may be aſhamed of your prayers and duties, as well as your ſins and iniquities; and therefore it is not for the ſake of your perſons or prayers either, *be it known unto you*; and therefore the meaning of the word is, that as all Iſrael hath a right of acceſs to theſe promiſes; and all poor ſinners that hear tell of them, may come to a throne of grace, and plead for the accompliſhment of them to themſelves, in a way of free grace; ſo in the diligent uſe of all theſe means and

ordinances of my appointment, they ſhall find, that I will yield myſelf exorable and eaſy to be entreated; and ſo it is an encouragement to prayer, in expectation that God will confer the promiſed bleſſings, and not that our prayers will obtain them; and therefore the more that a man turns ſuch a ſcripture to a covenant of works, as if he were upon terms with God, that upon condition that he pray and ſeek, God will give him the promiſed bleſſings; the more he does ſo, I ſay, the further is he from all theſe bleſſings; whereas the leſs hope and expectation that a poor ſoul hath from his prayers, he will always find, that he will come the more ſpeed.

In a word, the prayer you ſpeak of, man, is either a natural or a ſpiritual prayer; if it be a natural prayer, then, as the natural man is bound to pray, and yet hath nothing to expect, but of ſovereign free grace; ſo there is no connection betwixt his prayer and the promiſe, unleſs we turn rank Arminians: If it be a ſpiritual prayer, then to be ſure, the promiſe hath prevented his prayer; for to ſay that none of theſe promiſes are given, till a man *pray in the Spirit* for them, is croſs to the whole current of ſcripture, and ſpiritual reaſon; for, how can a man pray in the Spirit till that promiſe be accompliſhed in ſome meaſure upon him, *I will put my Spirit within you?* Thus his love prevents our prayers, it prevents our deſires and endeavours: *He firſt loved us.*——And ſo much ſhall ſuffice for the firſt general head.

II. The *ſecond* thing propoſed was, to ſpeak of *believers love* to God and Chriſt; *We love him:* This is but a ſmall ſtream that flows from, and runs again to the ocean of his love. We may take up this love of the ſaints towards God in the following conſiderations.

1. We may conſider this love in its *nature*. It is not a ſpark of natural kindling; it is not from natutural reaſon or common grace, no; it is from the ſaving operation of the Holy Ghoſt, circumciſing the heart to love God; *the fruits of the Spirit are faith, love,* and

and the reſt of the graces: it is altogether ſuper-natural; for the *natural mind is enmity againſt God:* we naturally hate God. Sirs, though the worſt perſon in the world will ſay they do not hate God, yet they really do it; and their hatred appears in their averſion from him and his ways, their oppoſition to his commands and counſels, their contempt of his promiſes, and neglect of his ſalvation, and his Chriſt; for *they will not come to him, that they might have life.* It is God's prerogative to turn the heart *from enmity to love, from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God:* no man can turn himſelf more than the *Ethiopian can change his ſkin, or the leopard his ſpots,* Jer. xiii. 23. Men, by their improvement of their natural faculties, and by common grace, which moſt part of men have ſomething of, come to a ſermon, and go to their knees, carry ſomewhat of morality and modeſty, but they are not able to command themſelves to love God; nay, duty is a burden; the word is a wearineſs to them; they are mad upon idols; they make *the Lord to ſerve with their ſin;* and their duties to ſerve as a covering to their luſts; and make uſe of duty for this, that they may be looked upon as good men, and not Atheiſts: but let them do their beſt, they cannot expel that curſed habit of enmity, nor introduce the contrary habit of love, till the power of God come along diſcovering the bounty and glory of Chriſt, and transforming the ſoul after the ſame image; for this love imports a ſaving knowledge of this glorious object beloved, a high eſteem of the object thus known, a hearty choice of him whom we thus eſteem, and a ſweet recumbency in this choice. The underſtanding is made to ſee, the judgment to eſteem, the will to chuſe, and the ſoul to acquieſce in him.—— But theſe things I cannot enlarge upon.

2. We may conſider this love in the *kinds* of it. And here I would ſpeak only of two kinds in general, *namely*, a more *common*, and a more *ſpecial* love.

(1.) There is a more *common love*, which even hypocrites may have, and may have it as a fruit of God's Spirit in this common operation, while yet they are

not renewed in the whole man. As they may have a temporary faith, ſo they may have a love proportioned to this. The ſeed of the word falls into the heart, as into ſtony ground, and it quickly ſprings up in ſome flaſhes of affection, and fair flouriſhes of a a profeſſion, ſo as they may ſeem, to themſelves and others, to be among the beſt of Chriſtians, while yet it is not any ſpecial work of God's Spirit, but a common gift and grace. The Lord deſigns to tame and civilize ſome, as well as to ſave and convert others. Now, this love, however great and vehement it may be in appearance, yet it is but a land-flood: at the beſt it hath not a ſpring; it is nouriſhed as a pool of water, not as a well of water; the water which the Lord, gives to his people, it is *in them as a well of water, ſpringing up to everlaſting life*, John iv. 14. But the hypocrite's love is a *returning to the Lord*, but not with the *whole heart*. It is a love as is deſcribed in the Jews, *They ſerved the Lord, and they ſerved Aſhtaroth*: to pacify their conſciences, they will ſerve the Lord; but to ſatisfy their affections, they will ſerve their luſts: they never ſell their *all* for the *pearl of great price*; they never reſt upon him as their preſent, only, and greateſt good, nor find full ſatisfaction in him. They never come to that with it, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in all the earth that I deſire beſides thee*. There is ſomething beſide Chriſt that they deſire; they have ſome eſteem of him, when he ſmiles on them in his providences, when they get eaſe to their conſciences; and, by their falſe hopes of heaven, apprehend matters to be well-enough with them. But when the Lord begins to frown, and the courſe of his providence is turned, then their love is turned into hatred; and *the hatred wherewith they hate him, is greater than the love wherewith they loved him*. As John's hearers rejoice *in his light for a ſeaſon*, and but for a *ſeaſon*; and Chriſt's hearers cry this day, *Hoſanna*, and the next day, *Crucify him*; and, as *many people followed Chriſt for the loaves*, becauſe he fed them; ſo many ſtill follow Chriſt, ſome for outward things, and

becauſe

becauſe of his general merciful diſpenſations; yea, ſome for inward things: O, ſay they, ordinances are pleaſant; it is a ſweet thing to get a tear at a ſermon, and to be raviſhed with ſomething of the glory of heaven, and privileges of the ſaints: no doubt the joy with which the ſtony-ground hearers received the word, had its ſweetneſs and pleaſure, and thereupon their hearts are aloft, and they think they love Chriſt above all things; but yet their root is rottenneſs; they never truly come to Chriſt, to get reſt to their hearts and conſciences from the filth and guilt of ſin. But,

(2.) There is a *ſpecial love*, whereby the whole ſoul is carried out towards the Lord, as the chief, preſent, and only good, and whereby the ſoul ſees nothing in heaven or earth deſirable in compariſon of him; and that acts towards a preſent Chriſt, in rejoicing in him; and towards an abſent Chriſt, by lamenting after him: it acts by cleaving to him, when they have the greateſt temptations to go away, and it appears moſt when Chriſt threatens to depart; and it cleaves moſt to him, when many are departing from him; *To whom ſhall we go, thou haſt the words of eternal life.* It counts *all but loſs and dung for him:* Chriſt gets the throne of their hearts, the cream of their affections, the very ſoul of their ſouls, their moſt vehement love; whatever other things they love, it is but in a ſubordination to him; whatever other things they rejoice in, he is their chief joy; *I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy;* Pſalm xliii. 4. Their joy in him exceeds the joy that they have in any thing elſe in a world.

3. We may conſider this love in the *degrees* of it. I would not be for the breaking *a bruiſed reed, or quenching a ſmoaking flax;* my heart's deſire is, that all that love Chriſt, even in the weakeſt degree, if it be a ſpecial love, may go away rejoicing in him; therefore I tell you of theſe four degrees of this love.

(1.) There is a love of *deſire* after Chriſt, that is not yet arrived at a full complacency in him; *The deſire of our ſoul is to thy name*, ſays the Church. A poor creature

creature may have a rooted deſire after Chriſt, that is not yet come the length of a rooted delight in him; becauſe through unbelief they queſtion their ſpecial intereſt in him: but *bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs; for they ſhall be filled.* If a gracious deſire after Chriſt be rooted in the ſoul, there is true love. Yea, further, this deſire hath ſeveral degrees alſo: ſometimes the deſire is like a *ſmoaking flax*, hardly can one diſcern the ſpark of red fire, only they ſee ſmoke as a ſign of fire; a *ſmoaking flax.*——This deſire may be ſtrangely *chocked*, ſometimes through the prevalence of unbelief: even the children of God, that have found and ſaving deſires, may become ſo heartleſs, as that they have no boldneſs to come to the Lord, and expreſs their deſires; all they can ſay is, that there is ſomething about the bottom of their heart of an earneſt wiſh, that the Lord would come to them, when they cannot come to him: all they can ſay is, *O, when will he come to me!* Or, *when will he give me a viſit! O, there is none in the world needs a viſit ſo much I!*—Sometimes their deſires are more *vivid* and *lively*, more bright and ſhining, and break forth in ardent prayers and pantings of ſoul after him; *As the hart pants after the water brooks, ſo pants my ſoul after thee, O God: my ſoul thirſts for God, for the living God. With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, and with my ſpirit within me, will I ſeek thee early.*—Sometimes again their deſires become ſo *ſtrong*, as that the perſon is made to put on a reſolution, as David did, *I will neither give ſleep to mine eyes, nor ſlumber to mine eye-lids, till I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. Lo, we heard of it at Ephrata, we found it in the fields of the wood*, Pſalm cxxxii. 4, 5, 6.——Their deſires may be ſuch as to make them *reſtleſs*, till they get their hearts made a fit habitation for him; they may be ſuch as to carry their ſouls aloft above all temporary enjoyments, and make them *mount up on wings as eagles*; and to look down upon all the enjoyments of time, and ſublunary comforts, as altogether contemptible. But then,

(2.) As

(2.) As there is a love of deſire, ſo of *delight* and *complacency*, whereby they take up their reſt and ſatisfaction in him, ſaying, *Tho' the fig-tree ſhould not bloſſom, nor fruit ſhould be found in the vine*, &c.; *yet will I rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* Indeed, they that have found ſaving deſires after the Lord, are unſatisfied till their deſire be turned to delight, and till they attain this, *Whom having not ſeen we love; in whom, though now we ſee him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* When the Lord manifeſts himſelf to them, as reconciled in Chriſt, when he manifeſts his love to their ſouls, and opens the flood-gates of his Spirit's influences, O then they cannot but delight in him, and *be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs*; for then they have a *feaſt of fat things, and of wines on the lees, well refined.* O ſenſualiſts, that never had a more pleaſant hour all your days, than when you ſat down to a hearty meal of meat or drink, you are but a miſerable creature; *There is meat to eat that you know not of, and joy that you intermeddle not with.* O the joy and triumph that there is in the enjoyment of a God in Chriſt; *Thanks be to God, which always cauſes us to triumph in Chriſt;* ALWAYS CAUSES TO TRIUMPH! It is true, the ſouls of believers may ſometimes wander from the Lord, even after they have experienced this enjoyment; and never more readily than on the back of a ſweet communion: their deſires may wander after other things; they may fall aſleep; they are not yet perfect, nor delivered from a body of death; and therefore after that, they may come under doubts, and great fears; and theſe may bring them very low, and may much alienate their hearts from the Lord; yea, but they are as the needle in the compaſs, that can never reſt or ſettle till it comes to the right point. They can never reſt till they get into his boſom again: they find their caſe a wilderneſs caſe, wherein they are wandering from mountain to hill, and therefore they ſay, *Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul:* they are made again to return to him, and take more delight in

him

him than ever; and, by delighting in him get an earneſt-penny of heaven.

(3.) There is a love of *benevolence* and *good-will* towards Chriſt, and his intereſt in the world, that all his concerns in the world may go right, and *that no weapon formed againſt Zion may proſper*. By this love, all theſe things, whereby God makes himſelf known, his word, his ordinances, his people, his precepts, his truths, are precious. And to this we may join,

(4.) The love of *beneficence*, whereby they do all they can for the honour of Chriſt, the good of his church, the credit of his truths, and for bearing down every intereſt oppoſite to his.——But theſe things may perhaps fall under another head.

4. We may conſider this love in the *dimenſions* of it: as God's love towards his people hath *height, and depth, and length, and breadth*, ſo there is ſomething like dimenſions of that ſort in their love to him.

(1.) Their love is a *high* love, it hath a height; it is a tranſcendent love; they love him *above all things*; they love him *more than father or mother, ſiſter or brother, profit or pleaſure, credit or preferment; yea, doubtleſs, they count all things but loſs and dung in compariſon of him*. The language of their ſoul is, *None but Chriſt*: in all things he hath the pre-eminence.

(2.) Their love hath a *depth*; for it is rooted in the heart, and does not float in the fancy. The love of many is but like a thaw, that will ſometimes be on the face of the ground, by the heat of the ſun, while there is a hard froſt below in the earth; ſo their love is but ſuperficial, upon the ſurface of the ſoul; there is ſome thaw, but the heart is hard; true love hath a deep root.

(3.) Their love hath a *breadth*: they not only love his mercy and grace, but his faithfulneſs, juſtice, and holineſs: they love not only his covenant promiſes, but his kindly threatnings; not only his favourable providences, but alſo his fatherly chaſtiſements: they love every thing that hath any thing of God in it; his people, becauſe they are his image; his ordinances, becauſe they are his galleries; they love *the place where*

where his honour dwells; and every thing that hath a divine ſtamp and ſuperſcription.

(4.) Their love hath a *length* in it, as well as a height, and depth, and breadth. It is not like the hope of the hypocrite *that periſheth.* Their hope and love, who are hypocrites, is built upon an airy fancy and empty imagination; it is built upon ſand, and ſo it falls to the ground; but the believer's love is built upon the faith of the promiſe, and the faith of the love of God; it is built upon the rock of ages, and ſo the building ſtands. Some will have a love to a thing to-day, and quit it to-morrow; but love to Chriſt will never go quite out. It is true, their love is not always exerciſed, or always equal in its exerciſe; for ſometimes it is like a coal below the aſhes, yet all the power of hell cannot quench it; *for many waters cannot quench love:* it may be over-toped with the weeds of corruption, and out of view; *for the fleſh luſteth after the Spirit;* and the fleſh may be ſtrong, and the Spirit or grace weak, but ſtill the root remains, and ſhall grow up to perfection.

5. We may conſider this love in the *properties* of it. Some of them have been touched in the preceeding heads, therefore, in ſhort,

(1.) True love to God in Chriſt is a *free* and *voluntary* love. Some people force themſelves up, as it were, to an eſteem for Chriſt, by uſing manifold arguments; and after all, it is but imaginary and mercenary love: they are not under the conſtraint of goſpel-grace, but the conſtraint of legal hope; expecting ſome reward for their love and ſervice: but here the perſon loves the Lord for himſelf, and ſerves him without legal compulſion or co-action; or by legal fears of hell, or legal hope of heaven. As he loves them freely, in oppoſition to merit, ſo they love him freely in oppoſition to legal compulſion.

(2.) True love is a *ſincere* love; *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity.* It is a loving the Lord *with all the heart, ſoul, mind and ſtrength;* it is hearty, and hath its abode in the inner chambers of the heart. It does not ly in the tongue

or lip, or the outward profeſſion only, but in the heart, and affection, and ſoul of man.

(3.) True love is an *ardent* love: it is compared to *fire* that hath a moſt vehement flame: it is like fire for light; it is the diſcovery of Chriſt that makes the ſoul to love him, and it makes the man's *light to ſhine before men*, ſo as his heavenly Father is glorified. It is like fire for heat; it heats the breaſt, and warms the affections, and flames towards Chriſt when he is ſeen. It is like the fire for its conſuming quality; it conſumes luſts and corruptions: *Many waters cannot quench it:* no water of ſin, of affliction, of deſertion, or temptation.

(4.) True love is *active* love; it makes the ſoul to act for God, and for Chriſt, ſaying, O what ſhall I do for him? *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?* It conſtrains to ſervices and ſufferings for Chriſt.

(5.) True love is an *uniting* love: it carries out the ſoul towards union and communion with God in Chriſt; he affects communion with him in his thoughts and meditations; *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet.*—— Communion with him in his ordinances, communion with him in his grace, and communion with him in glory.

(6.) True love is a *ſolicitous* and *careful* love: it is careful to avoid whatever is offending to God, careful to provide whatever is pleaſing to him; careful and ſolicitous leſt it ſhould loſe his company; careful and ſolicitous to recover a ſight of him when he abſents himſelf.

(7.) True love is a *bold* and *venturing* love; it will adventure upon reproaches, perſecutions, dangers, difficulties, yea, and death itſelf, for the ſake of the Lord Jeſus. When there are greateſt difficulties, true love will cleave moſt to Chriſt: when there is a general apoſtacy, true love will appear moſt for Chriſt, as the two witneſſes, Revel. xi. 3. When men make breaches upon the truth of God, the true lover of Chriſt will caſt himſelf into the breach, as Pergamus did, Rev. ii. 13. In a word, when love cannot ſtand

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in the breach, it will mourn for the diſhonour done to Chriſt, and weep in ſecret places for it. All theſe proceed from the invincible valour of love.

(8.) True love is a *perſevering* love: when faith and hope, in ſome reſpect, will carry us no further than the grave, love will go over the border of time, and remain in heaven for ever.

(9.) True love is a *conjugal* love, a marriage love: and as conjugal love is a *loyal* love; ſo is true love to Chriſt: It calls Jeſus LORD and KING: *He is thy Lord and worſhip thou him*, Pſal. xlv. 11. As conjugal love is a *chaſte* love; ſo true love to Chriſt cannot endure a rival: it allows no mate, no luſt, no Delilah, to come in Chriſt's room, without the utmoſt abhorrence. As conjugal love is a *reverential* love; ſo true love to Chriſt carries towards him with holy fear and reverence, and filial regard. And as a conjugal love is a *fruitful* and *fruit-bearing* love; ſo true love to Chriſt is a love that bears fruit to him; *Ye are dead to the law by the body of Chriſt, and married to another, even to Chriſt, that ye might bring forth fruit unto God.*—— Again,

(10.) True love is an *aſſimilating* love; it changes the perſon in whom it is, into the image of the glorious and beloved object, and make him deſire, above all things, to be like unto Chriſt; ſaying, O, to be holy! O, to be free of ſin! O, to be full of God! O, to be conform to the image of Chriſt! yea, the more love, the more likeneſs.

(11.) In a word, ſometimes it is an *extatical* love, as if the man were beſide himſelf, and out of himſelf: hence that proverb, *Amantes, Amantes;* like that of the apoſtle, *If we be beſide ourſelves, it is to God*, 2 Cor. v. 13. It carries the ſoul out of itſelf, ſaying with the church, *The voice of my beloved, behold he comes;* it is an abrupt kind of ſpeech, like that of a perſon tranſported, raviſhed, and in a rapture: *The voice of my beloved, behold he cometh:* ſometimes there is a ray of glory, a bright glance of the Sun of righteouſneſs.

6. We may conſider this love in the *effects* of it.

(1.) This love vents itſelf in *prayer* and *ſupplication; O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee*, Pſalm lxiii. 1.

(2.) It vents itſelf in *praiſe* and *commendation*; *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thouſand*, Cant. v. 10.

(3.) It vents itſelf in *wonder* and *admiration; Behold what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God.*

(4.) It vents itſelf in *obedience* and *obſervatiou* of his law; *If you love me, keep my commandments.*

(5.) It vents itſelf in *hatred* of ſin, and *every* falſe way; *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.*

(6.) It vents itſelf in loving *every thing* that belongs to God. And this might lead me to ſhew how,

7. We may conſider this love in the *object* of it, and in the *extent* of its object: why, the true lover of Chriſt, he loves a whole Chriſt.

(1.) He loves him in his *perſon*, as he is the *brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 3.

(2.) He loves him in his *natures*, as he is God-man; IMMANUEL, *God with us.*

(3.) He loves him in his *offices*; as he is a Prophet, to take away his darkneſs; a Prieſt, to take away his guilt; and a King, to take away his ſin, and to ſubdue his luſts.

(4.) He loves him in his *relations;* as he ſtands related to God, being his eternal Son; as he ſtands related to the covenant, being the Mediator, Witneſs, Surety, and Teſtator, and all of it; and as he ſtands related to his church, being their Head and Huſband, and all relations to them. You ſee what a large field I might here go through.

(5.) He loves him in his *righteouſneſs*, both active and paſſive, as having fulfilled the law, and ſatisfied the juſtice of God in our room.

(6.) He loves him in his *merit* and *purchaſe;* he loves him in his Spirit and grace; he loves him in his commands, promiſes, and comforts; he loves him in his work and wages; he loves him his miniſters and people;

people; he loves him in his goſpel and ordinances; he loves him in his crown, honour, and glory; he loves him in his croſs, his reproach, and ſuffering; he loves him in every thing about him, and eſpecially in himſelf, as being *altogether lovely*. And this leads to another conſideration.

8. We may conſider this love in the *grounds* of it. Indeed it is a God in Chriſt they love: more particularly, if you aſk, what are the grounds of the ſaints love to Chriſt? Why,

(1.) Their love to him is grounded upon his *worth, beauty, and excellency;* the ſoul loves him, becauſe of his own amiable excellency. When the ſoul gets a view of Chriſt's own beauty, and of the glory of God in him, his power, wiſdom, holineſs, grace, mercy, and other properties, his heart is raviſhed with love within him. O the thoughts of his worth, and his fulneſs of grace and good-will is overcoming? *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee*, Song i. 3.

(2.) Their love to him is grounded upon his *undertaking* for them, and accompliſhing that undertaking: they love him becauſe of what he did undertake from eternity, and perform in time; *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me!* They love him, becauſe he put himſelf in their nature, for their good: they love him, becauſe he put his name in their debt-bonds and bills: they love him, becauſe he put their names in his laſt-will, and in the book of life: they love him, becauſe he put his Spirit, his nature, and his Father's image into them.

(3.) Their love to him is grounded upon his *Father's love* to him, and ſatisfaction in him; *The Lord is well pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake*, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* And, O but Chriſt be deſervedly the object of the ſaints love, becauſe he is the object of the Father's love, who loves him, both as he is his Son, and as he is our Surety; and therefore as the ſum of all,

(4.) Their

(4.) Their love to him is grounded upon his love to them; *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.* This leads me to

III. The *third* general head, *viz.* The *influence* that his love hath upon theirs as the cauſe of it. And here I would, 1. Clear and demonſtrate it, that his loving us is the *cauſe* of our loving him. 2. Enquire what *influence* his love hath upon ours.

1. As to the firſt of theſe, to clear this point, we would offer the following conſiderations.

(1.) Conſideration is, That a natural man, that looks upon God, can never have a heart-love to him, whatever he pretends. It is true, many fancy God loves them, and pretend they have a love to him, like ſome in the church at Epheſus, who ſaid, they *were apoſtles, and were not, but were found liars;* ſo many pretend they know God, and love him, who yet *in works deny him;* and by their practice are found liars; and the viſion of their heads is like to end in utter darkneſs. It is true alſo, that all that have a love to God, have not the full aſſurance of God's love to them: ſome may live under his frowns, who are yet in a ſtate of favour: there may be ſome true love, where yet there is but little joyful aſſurance; yet, I ſay, theſe who have no faith at all of God's love in Chriſt, but look upon God as an implacable enemy, they can have no hearty love to him; nay, conſcience of guilt, and fear of wrath make them run away from God as an enemy; the ſpirit of ſlaviſh fear, which all awakened ſinners are naturally poſſeſt of, till God ſhew them his love and favour in Chriſt, will rather harden men in their enmity, than melt them into love. If there were nothing but the terror of the Lord to be known, converſion would be impoſſible.

(2.) Conſideration is, That the greater the ſenſe of God's love in Chriſt is, the ſtronger will our love to him be. Hence there are ſuch different degrees of love to God among the ſaints, and even in the ſame ſaints, or believers, at ſeveral ſeaſons, according as they have more or leſs of the comfortable apprehenſion of the

love

love of God in Chriſt: for, although the love of God be not variable, yet our views and apprehenſions of it are. Every believer hath his dark and gloomy days, as well as his bright and pleaſant days; and the leſs ſenſible views he hath of God's love and favour, the more ſenſible deadneſs in duty, and decay of love to God takes place. When the believer wants the faith of God's love, his wings are clipt; but when his heart is fraughted with a large meaſure of the faith of God's love, then he *mounts up on wings as an eagle:* then the love of Chriſt *conſtrains him;* and his heart *is enlarged to run the way of God's commandments.*

(3.) Conſideration, That the love of God diſcovered, breaks the power of all theſe things that hinder our love to him. Is ſelf-love a ſnare to keep us from the love of God? Well, a diſplay of God's love breaks the powers of ſelf-love. When Job got a diſcovery of the glory of God's grace, then *he abhors himſelf.* When we know that God is *pacified towards us,* it makes us *loath and abhor ouſelves,* Ezek. xvi. 63. A ſinner is never ſo odious in his own ſight, as when he is perſuaded of his being precious in God's ſight. Does the flattery of the world allure men from the love of God? Well, but the diſplays of God's love make *the world to be crucified to us, and us to the world.*— Chriſt's love diſcovered obſcures all the ſeeming glory of the world, as the ſun darkens the leſſer lights, and as the works of nature ſpoil the reputation of the works of art. Do the frowns of the world ſcar us from the love of God and his way? Well, but the diſplay of God's love to us is a noble ſecurity againſt this temptation; for little matter, who be againſt us, if God be for us; *His loving-kindneſs is better than life:* therefore, though the rage of men ſhould reach our lives, yet what compariſon is betwixt the breath of our noſtrils, and the favour of an eternal God? We do not love God in Chriſt, becauſe we do not know him; but when his love is diſplayed, then he is known in the light of the Spirit, *As a Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt;* the Spirit comes as a Spirit

a Spirit of light; and thus the love of God is *ſhed abroad upon the heart by the Holy Ghoſt.*

(4.) Conſideration, When God diſplays his love, he at the ſame time transforms the ſoul to whom he diſcovers himſelf, and makes it a new creature. Now, the new nature is a grateful and loving nature; depraved nature may reward evil for good, and hatred for love; but it is not ſo with the new nature, it natively renders love for love; it is native to the ſoul upon the diſcovery of God's love, his everlaſting love, to be conſtrained to his ſervice and obedience; *If you love me, keep my commandments.* Now, this love, that is the product of God's love, is virtually all obedience; and therefore love is ſaid to be the *fulfilling of the law*: and when loves takes place, *his commandments are not grievous*, but pleaſant; yea, when the love of God is in the heart, then the *law of God is in the heart.*— But then,

2. To enquire more particularly what *influence* God's love hath upon ours: *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us:* our love is juſt the reflex of his, as the ſun ſhining upon a glaſs. Why, how does his love to us influence our love to him? (1.) It hath a *moral* influence, in point of *motive.* (2.) A *phyſical* influence, in point of *power.*

(1.) It hath a *moral influence*, in point of *motive*; and ſo it is the moral cauſe of our love; the incentive, the argument. What will move us to love, if the diſplay of this infinite love does it not? We cannot but love ſuch a good God, who was firſt in the act and work of love; that loved us when we were both unloving and unlovely; that loved us at ſuch a rate, as to ſeek and ſolicite our love at the expence of his Son's blood. O amazing love! Is there any motive can be ſtronger to engage us to love him again? Shall not the love of Chriſt conſtrain us to love him again? What in all the world will endear a ſoul to God, if the love of God do it not?——So much as we ſee of the love of God, ſo much we love him, and delight in him, and no more. Every other diſcovery of God without this, will but make the ſoul to flee from him. If the faith and

and apprehenſion of his free love, of his ancient love, his antecedent love, his preventing love, ſuch as I have ſpoken of, be no motive or argument to influence us to love him, there is no argument in the world will prevail.

2. It hath a *phyſical influence*, in point of power; and ſo it is not only the moral, but the productive cauſe. There is a power in his love that conquers, captivates, and overpowers the man, ſo that he cannot but love: God's love hath a generative power: our love is brought forth by his love, James i. 18. *Of his own will he begat us;* that is, of his own free *love* and *good-will*. Divine love makes ſuch an impreſſion, that it inſtamps love upon the ſoul. As his love hath a generating power, ſo it hath a creating power; his love infuſes and creates love in the perſon. Beloved, it works good in the man, that is the object of it: his power and will are commenſurate; what he wills, he works; and when the time of love or of manifeſting love comes, the time of power comes; *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.* His love hath a conſtraining power; *The love of Chriſt conſtrains us*; and his love hath a drawing power; *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love; therefore with loving kindneſs will I draw thee.* He draws with *the cords of love*, and thereby draws the heart towards him *in love:* and hence never a ſoul taſted the ſweetneſs of his everlaſting love, but at the ſame time he felt the power of it warming the heart, and kindling a fire of love there. O how does his mighty love break the power of their mighty enmity! Was ever pardoning mercy and love intimated, but the pardoned ſoul behoved to read the pardon with tears of joy; and *to love much when much was forgiven?* Can they chuſe but love him, *Who are the called according to his purpoſe of love?* Rom. viii. 28.—*We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.*

IV. The *fourth* general head, was the *application*. Is it ſo, that God's love to his people is the ſource and cauſe of their love to him? Then we may apply it for *information*; and,

1. Hence ſee the difference betwixt *God's love* to the *ſaints*, and the *ſaints love* to *God*. It is true, their loves agree in ſeveral things: his love to them is a love of complacency, he delights in them; and their love to him is a love of complacency, they delight in him: he loves them in Chriſt, and they love him in Chriſt; but yet vaſtly great is the difference betwixt his love and theirs. 1. His love is *eternal*, their love is but of *yeſterday's date*. 2. His love is the *original cauſe*, their love is the *native effect* of his. 3. His love is an *antecedent love*, it goes before theirs, as the father loves the child when the child knows not the father, much leſs loves him; yea, they are by nature haters of God. And ſurely all muſt begin on his ſide; *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us:* yea, his love not only goes before our love, but before every thing that is lovely in us; *God commends his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* Sin imports all unlovelineſs and undeſirableneſs that can be in a creature; yet he loves: but then our love is a *conſequential* love. 4. His love being free and eternal is always *equal* and *unchangeable*; for, *The Strength of Iſrael is not a man that he ſhould repent;* but our love to him is *unequal* and *changeable*, up and down: his love is like the ſun, always the ſame in its light, though a cloud may ſometimes interpoſe; our love is like the moon, hath its waxings and weanings: his love, I ſay, is like the ſun, always the ſame in its light. It is true, as the ſun is ſometimes under a cloud; ſo the fruits and manifeſtations of God's love may change; now he ſhines, now he hides his face, as it may be moſt for our profit; but ſtill his love in itſelf is the ſame.——Whatever changes affect the ſaints, whether as to ſin or ſuffering, yet God's love to them is unchangeable. Why, were it not blaſphemy to ſay, that God loves his people in their ſinning, as well as in their ſtricteſt obedience? If ſo, who will care to ſerve him more? To which it might be replied, The love of God in itſelf is no more changeable than God himſelf; and what then? Loves he his people in their ſinning? by no means;

means; he loves his *people*, not their *ſinning*. Alters he his love to them? No; not his love, but the diſcoveries of his love: he ſmites them, rebukes them, and fills them with a ſenſe of indignation. But wo would be to us if he changed in his love: nay, *He is God, and changes not; therefore the ſons of Jacob are not conſumed.* Theſe very things which ſeem to be demonſtrations of the change of his affection, do as clearly proceed from love to them, even his chaſtiſements, as any other diſpenſations. Well, but will not this encourage to ſin? "O ſure he never taſted, as one "ſays, of the love of God, that can ſeriouſly make "this objection." The *doctrine* of grace may be turned into *wantonneſs*, but the *principle* of grace cannot. His love, I ſay, being free, eternal, and preventing love, is in itſelf always equal and unchangeable; but our love to God is an ebbing and flowing love. We are ſcarce a day at a ſtand. This hour we may be at this, *Though all men forſake thee, yet will not I!* and the next hour at this, *I know not the man.* When was ever the time that our love was equal one day to an end?

2. Hence ſee the difference betwixt *juſtification* and *ſanctification*; and the *priority* of juſtification to ſanctification: We may here notice the difference betwixt the one and the other. Many are the differences betwixt them, but I confine myſelf to what the text imports. 1. In juſtification, *God loves us*, and ſhews his love in Chriſt; in ſanctification, *we love God*, and ſhew our love to him: for the comprehenſive ſum of active holineſs is love, *which is the fulfilling of the law.* 2. In juſtification, we have the *favour of God*; in ſanctification, we have the *image of God*; and the ſpecial part of his image is love. 3. In juſtification, we are *paſſive*, as when God ſet his love upon us; but in ſanctification, we are *active*, while his love cauſes us to act in loving him. 4. Juſtification is God's *act* of love *without us*, in and through the merit and righteouſneſs of Chriſt *imputed* to us; ſanctification is God's *work* of grace *within us*, by the Spirit of Chriſt *imparted* to us as a Spirit of love, as well as of other graces. 5. Juſ-

tification is *perfect*, *equal*, and *always* the ſame, like the love of God, the original cauſe, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt the meritorious cauſe of it; but ſanctification is *imperfect*, *unequal*, and *changeable*; for the love of the ſaints, as I ſaid, is up and down 6. Juſtification is the *cauſe*; ſanctification the *effect*; even as God's love is the cauſe of our love. 7. *Faith* in juſtification is an *inſtrument* receiving Chriſt, *as the Lord our righteouſneſs*, and apprehending the love and mercy of God in him; but faith in ſanctification is an *agent*, employing Chriſt *as the Lord our ſtrength*, to enable us to manifeſt our love to him. Thus we ſee the priority of divine love and favour, and acceptation and juſtification before any work of ours; and ſo, how any can maintain, that actual goſpel-repentance (which muſt be a work of ours, and a piece of ſanctification at leaſt) doth go before, and is neceſſary in order to juſtification, let the judicious conſider, without receding from our ſtandards, and binding their faith to the belt of any fallible creatures, councils, or acts. That *legal repentance*, or humiliation and conviction, and ſenſe of ſin, does go before juſtification, in order of *divine operation*, is plain; and that habitual ſanctification, or regeneration, and the infuſing of all grace into the ſoul, is alſo precious, is not denied: But that *goſpel-repentance*, or any part of actual ſanctification, is neceſſary in order to juſtification and pardon, I do not ſee how it is poſſible to maintain that, without running into the Roman camp, and fighting with popiſh weapons, and inverting the order of our text, making any part of our love to God neceſſary *firſt* in order to God's *loving us*. But ſure God's method of doing will ſtand in ſpite of hell and earth: *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.*

3. Hence we may ſee, that as the perſuaſion that is in the nature of faith lies in the apprehenſion of the love and mercy of God in Chriſt to a man's ſelf in particular; ſo this doctrine of faith does not *make void the law*, but *eſtabliſh and fulfil it*, if we conſider love as *the fulfilling of the law*; for the language of this text,

text, when read in the ſingular number is, *I love him, becauſe he firſt loved me; He firſt loved me*, there is faith's apprehenſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt. It is true, a believer may ſay, I know not whether he loved me or not; but ſure I am it is not his faith that ſays ſo, but unbelief; but the ſtronger that his faith is, to be ſure the more will he be able to ſay, *He loved me*; and the more he can ſay this, the more can he ſay the other alſo, *I love him*: and there is obedience, goſpel-obedience, the obedience of faith, which is a loving obedience; for the law of Chriſt is a law of love: it is blaſphemy againſt the love of God to reproach it, as a mother of licentiouſneſs, and a nurſe of carnal ſecurity. They that have the love of God in their eye, can take no encouragement from thence to ſin; for ſin tends to cloud that light wherein they rejoice. If it were poſſible for a believer to think that God loves him, and thereupon ſhould take encouragement to ſin, then I am bold to ſay, it is not the faith of God's operation takes place at that time with him, but only a fancy, and a ſtrong temptation of Satan, working upon that fancy: for a true faith of God's love, brings holineſs, love, and obedience along with it, as natively as the riſing-ſun brings light. God's love of bounty diſplayed, does as natively bring in our love of duty, as it is natural for the fire to bring heat. Is it poſſible that God's communicating his thoughts of peace to a child will embolden him to new acts of treaſon? No; if the ſenſe of God's love did not wear off, and ſecurity and unwatchfulneſs wear on, the believer's love would always be flaming in the fire of God's love. They have no experience of the love of God, who think that the diſcovery thereof would give them a licenſe to tranſgreſs.

4. Hence we ſee, that as the believer is perfectly free from vindictive wrath, from the curſe and penal ſanction of the law, ſo his *goſpel-obedience* is not influenced by *ſlaviſh fear of hell*, but by the *love of God*. How can the man that is actually juſtified, and *accepted in the Beloved*, and ſo the actual object of God's everlaſting, unchangeable love, ever fall under his vindictive

tive wrath, which is the threatning and ſentence of the law as a covenant of works? And, how can the believer that is obliged to believe this love, be ever obliged to ſerve from a fear of hell and vindictive wrath? That he may, through unbelief, apprehend God's vindictive wrath, and fear to be thrown into hell, is plain from common experience; but that the *fear of hell* ſhould be either a *goſpel-grace*, or a *believer's duty*, is ſome of the *new divinity* of our day. Filial child-like fear, which is the believer's duty at all times, is every way conſiſtent with love, yea, ſuppoſes and imports the faith of God's fatherly love; but ſlaviſh fear of hell, and vindictive wrath, excludes and oppoſes it. See the context, verſe 18. *There is no fear in love, but perfect love caſteth out* (ſlaviſh and tormenting) *fear.*

5. Hence we may ſee, the difference betwixt the *covenant of works* and the *covenant of grace.* The order of the covenant of works is, in ſome reſpect, quite croſs to the order here ſet down in our text; for, in the covenant of works, our love of duty was firſt to take place; and after that God's love of bounty, as the reward of our perfect love and obedience, according to the old covenant paction; whereas, in the covenant of grace, God's ſhews firſt his love of bounty, and then follows our love of duty. Never does the ſoul turn his affections towards God, if the heart of God be not firſt ſet upon him. Herein differ works in the new covenant, (for love, as I ſaid before, is the ſum of all work and obedience) from works in the old covenant. In the legal covenant, our love and work is firſt, and then God's favour and juſtification; but in the goſpel-covenant, God's love and favour in juſtification is firſt, and then our love and obedience follows. As the ſame day that the waters went off from the earth, and were gathered into the ſea, the earth was adorned with graſs and flowers, and was fruitful; ſo when the deluge of wrath goes off from the conſcience, and the favour of God appears in juſtification, then it is preſently adorned with the graces of the Spirit, and love among the chief of them, ſpringing

ſpringing up: whatever other motives engages to obedience here, yet love is the moſt prevalent motive; and here gratitude influences to obedience. In a word, the covenant of works was properly conditional to us, but the covenant of grace, however conditional to Chriſt, who hath performed the whole condition in his obedience to the death, yet to us it is abſolutely free and unconditional. Upon what condition have we God's love and favour? Does not his love prevent all conditions? *He firſt loved us*: his love prevents the true proper condition itſelf, namely, Chriſt's obedience; for his love ſent him to perform the ſame, much more does it prevent all that men call conditions. O! how far is our obedience, even the obedience of faith, from having any cauſality, or proper federal conditionality in obtaining ſalvation, ſeeing our imperfect love and obedience here is not the cauſe, but the effect of God's love and favour partly diſplayed, and our perfect love and obedience in heaven will be the effect of the full viſion of his glorious grace in heaven, *Where we ſhall be like him, becauſe we ſhall ſee him as he is?*

6. Hence we may ſee the blaſphemy of theſe who ſay, they are *believers in Chriſt*, and yet are not *lovers of God*; and who pretend to believe the grace of God, and yet *turn his grace to laſciviouſneſs*, by continuing in enmity againſt him, and diſcover their enmity by their ungodly practices; *The grace of God, that brings ſalvation, teaches us* quite the contrary; what the law teaches preceptively, the goſpel teaches effectively, *viz. To deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly*, Titus ii. 11, 12. She is not the ſpouſe of Chriſt, but an adultereſs, that impudently abuſes his love. They can have no true evidence of God's love to them, who have no love to him; for our love to him is the native reſult of his love to us; *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.* The love of God diſcovered, knocks down the natural enmity, which is the root of all diſobedience; and influences to love, which is the ſum of all obedience.

7. See

7. See hence the *eminent privilege* of the *ſaints*, whatever low thoughts the world may have of them. It is an honour to ſtand in the preſence of princes, though but as ſervants; what honour then have all the ſaints to ſtand with boldneſs in the preſence of God, and enjoy his boſom-love? The queen of Sheba pronounced a bleſſing on the ſervants of Solomon, who ſtood before him and heard his wiſdom; how much more bleſſed are they who ſtand continually before the God of Solomon, hearing his wiſdom and enjoying his love? As they are happy, ſo they are ſafe. Here is a ſafe and ſweet retreat to the ſaints in all the trials, reproaches, and miſrepreſentations they undergo in the world. When a child is abuſed in the ſtreet by ſtrangers, he runs with ſpeed to the boſom of his father; there he makes his complaint, and is comforted. In all the hard *cenſures* and *tongue-perſecutions* which the ſaints meet withal in the ſtreets of the world, they may run to their Father, and be comforted; his love can counter-balance all the world's frowns. O! how are they privileged beyond all the hypocritical world!—Hypocrites, for the moſt part, cannot be known or differenced from ſaints, in regard of their external duty and enjoyment; but while they are living in the love of their luſts, the ſaints are ſweetly wrapt up in the boſom of God's love; they have this meat to eat, and refreſhment in the banqueting-houſe, wherein others have no ſhare.

8. Hence ſee where it is we may get our *enmity killed*, and our *love quickened;* it is even in the love of God. What is the reaſon that the world have no love to God? Why, they cannot believe his love and good-will through Chriſt; and ſo they live in enmity. What is the reaſon that believers have ſo little love to God? Even becauſe their faith of his love is ſo weak. It is by faith we know *that God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf;* it is by faith *we ſee the King in his beauty*, and ſo cannot but love him; it is by faith that *we hear his voice*, and underſtand his words of grace, and ſay, *It is the voice of my Beloved:* it is by faith we embrace the *promiſes*, which are ſo many meſ-

ſages

ſages of love: it is by faith we *receive out of Chriſt's fulneſs, and grace for grace*; or, as the word may be rendered, *Love for love*. Faith breaks the ſhell of the promiſe, and then eats the kernel of God's love and grace that is there. Faith is the bucket wherewith we draw, Chriſt is the well, God is the fountain, and love is the water that we draw: O! what get you in Chriſt, poor ſoul, whenever you go to him? Can you not ſay, O, I get more love to God than I had! I never approached near him but I got a large draught and ample fill of love to God; *Out of his fulneſs, we receive grace for grace*, and love for love. In a word, by faith we *behold the glory of the Lord as in a glaſs, and are changed into the ſame image;* and the image of God is love. O then, the little faith that takes place in our day, makes little love to God and his people; faith and love are like twins that are born together, and live and die together. Go to the root of all our backſlidings, and you will find it unbelief; *An evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.*

Uſe of *examination.* Try your ſtate by this doctrine, whether or not you be in a ſtate of favour with God, and the objects of his love in a ſpecial manner. How ſhall I know, if he hath loved me? You may know it by that fruit and evidence of it in the text: if he hath manifeſted his love ſavingly to you, then you will love him, becauſe he hath loved you.

QUEST. *How ſhall I know, if I have that love to him, that is the fruit and effect of his firſt loving me?*

Anſw. 1*ſt*, If your love to him be ſuch as is the fruit of his love to you, then you have been convinced of your *natural enmity*, and that you never had any love, nor could have it, unleſs the Lord in love had, in ſome meaſure, manifeſted himſelf in his grace. Many ſpeak of their loving God all their days, as if it were natural for them to love God; poor creatures, they never ſaw or conſidered, that they were born with a dagger of enmity in their hearts againſt God. Theſe that truly love him have ſeen their want of love, and ſomething of the power and ſtrength of their en-

mity; and got it, in ſome meaſure, broken in a day of power.

2*dly*, If you have ſuch love to him, as is the fruit of his love to you, then you have ſeen his *glory*, and particularly the glory of his grace, and love to draw out your love towards him: *Shew me thy glory*, ſays Moſes to God; yea, ſays God, *I will make all my goodneſs paſs before thee.* His goodneſs and his love is his glory. If you have ſeen his glory, ſurely you *count all things but loſs and dung, in compariſon of him.*

3*dly*, If you have ſuch love, as is the fruit of his love, then his *lovelineſs* and *excellency* hath engaged you to *chuſe* him; to chuſe himſelf, for your God; his Chriſt, for your huſband; his covenant, for your charter; his precepts, for your rule; his people, for your companions; his purchaſe, for your jointure; his Spirit, for your guide; his promiſe, for your cordial; his glory, for your aim. If you have choſen him thus, and reſolve to abide by your choice, it is a fruit of his chuſing you from eternity: *You have not choſen me* firſt, *but I have choſen you.*

4*thly*, If you have ſuch love to him, as is the fruit of his loving you, then it is the *faith* of his love, that, in a ſpecial manner, will influence you to obedience, in all the duties of religion; *If you love me, keep my commandments:* yea, the faith of his love will influence you to ſuch a love to him, as will bring forth all the fruits of true love. And here I will tell you of ſome of the fruits of true love to God, by which you may try your love to him.

1. One fruit of true love is this; true love will make you *love* to be with him on *earth*, and *long* to be with him in *heaven.*

(1.) On the one hand, true love will make you love to be with him on *earth;* and this love will make you rejoice when he is preſent, ſaying, *O! my ſoul ſhall rejoice in God my Saviour:* and it will make you lament when he is abſent, ſaying, *O! that I knew where I might find him!* You will love to be with him in your *deſire*, ſaying, *He is the deſire of all nations*, and the deſire of my *ſoul.* You will love to be with him in your

your *delight*, ſaying, *A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, he ſhall ly all night betwixt my breaſts.* You will love to be with him in your *walk* and *converſation*, deſiring *to have your converſation in heaven*, and to walk with him. You will love to be with him in your *eſteem*, ſaying, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none in earth that I deſire beſide thee.* You will love to be with him in your *thoughts* and *meditations*, ſaying, *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet.* You will love to be with him in your *duties* and *performances*, in reading and hearing, and ſinging, in communicating, in praying. You will love to be with him, and to have him with you: particularly to be with him in prayer, is the moſt frequent thing with the believer: how does he love to emboſom himſelf to his God! The Legaliſt may do the duty, but to be with Chriſt in it, is what he is not much taken up with; the believer is taken up with prayer, as a mean of communion with God. O! I cannot ſtay away from him, though he ſhut the door upon me, *and cover himſelf with a cloud, that my prayer cannot paſs through;* I cannot be abſent from him. It is one of the main things that makes earth tolerable to the believer, that he hath ſometimes acceſs to God, in Chriſt, by the Spirit in prayer. If it were not for ſome ſweet meetings that he hath with the Lord this way, he would even be crying, O what a weary place is this earth! O let me out of it! I ſay, the true lover loves to be with God, and to have God with him. How does he love to have God with him, by his ſanctifying grace, by his enlightening, enlarging, enlivening, and comforting grace? True lovers love one anothers company. And,

(2.) As the true lover of Chriſt loves to be with him here, ſo on the other hand, he *longs* to be with him *hereafter.* O to be in the place of perfect love, where there will be an eternal emanation of the love of God! O to be in the place of perfect likeneſs to Chriſt! *For when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* Tho' they are reconciled to his will, and made content to abide here, while he pleaſes, yet they are even longing for that day, when they ſhall

have the immediate fruition of him, and be delivered from all ſin: they *deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all.* A carnal man may ſay, O to be out of an evil world! but the heart of the true lover ſay, *O to be with Chriſt?* It is true, when the believer's love is in freſh exerciſe, he will even ſometimes be willing to abide in this world, notwithſtanding of all the troubles and trials that are in it, if ſo be he may glorify God in it; whether by ſuffering for him, or giving a teſtimony againſt ſin, and for the truth and honour of the Lord Jeſus. O! if I may be of any uſe to any of thine; if I may be of any ſervice to thy Majeſty, and glorify thee by doing or ſuffering; if thou wilt help me to ſerve and honour thee in my life, let me even beg from door to door in the wilderneſs; through grace I will chearfully endure any trouble, and *glory in my infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon me.* This ſubmiſſion is not inconſiſtent with his longing to be with the Lord.——Thus, I ſay, true lovers of God, they love to be with him on earth, and long to be with him in heaven.

2. True love will make you long to be *like him*, ſaying, *O to be holy, as God is holy! O to be conform to the image of his Son! O to be like unto Chriſt!* Indeed, the man that hath moſt of the image of God, will readily ſee himſelf the moſt unlike to him; and look upon himſelf as the moſt unholy perſon on earth. O! my underſtanding is like a dark dungeon, my will is like a devil, and my heart like a hell; and yet ſomething of the light of God it is that thus diſcovers him to himſelf, ſo unlike to God; and ſomething of the love of God it is that makes him love to be like him, and deſire above all things to be quit of ſin, which is the devil's image, and to be endued with holineſs, which is God's image.

3. True love will make you love to *live upon him*: you will love to live upon God the *fountain of living water;* and love to live upon Chriſt, *for wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.* The lover of God is one that loves to *live by faith on the Son of God; To him to live is Chriſt:* Chriſt is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of

of his life; the food and medicine of his life; the Author and Reſtorer of his life; and the whole buneſs of his life. Many have little buſineſs with Chriſt; but the true believer, the true lover, Chriſt is the whole buſineſs of life: like the woman that, they ſay, took the body of her dead huſband and grind it to powder, and drank the powder in her daily drink, and ſo made her body a living tomb for her dead huſband. The believer is to live ſtill upon a dead and crucified huſband.

4. True love to God will make you love to *reverence* him: godly fear is a true mark of love; you will have a holy fear of diſpleaſing him; you will have a jealous fear, leſt your deceitful heart lead you aſide from him: *We receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace,* [or, *let us hold faſt grace,*] *whereby we may ſerve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a conſuming fire,* Heb. xii. 28, 29. All this is inconſiſtent with the ſlaviſh fear of hell: for the faith of *receiving the kingdom that cannot be moved,* and the fear of hell, which is a being excluded from that kingdom, are contradictory; but let us fear our God in Chriſt, who hath diſcovered himſelf in Chriſt to be even a *conſuming fire;* for this fire of infinite juſtice took hold of the man Chriſt Jeſus. When God dwelled in the buſh of our nature, the buſh burned in the flame of divine wrath, and juſtice was ſatisfied this way: herein God gave a more awful inſtance of his being a *conſuming fire,* in taking vengeance upon ſin in the Surety, than can be given by all the flames of hell, in which the wicked burn for eternity. But here God being in the buſh, the buſh burnt, but was not conſumed; *He that was dead, is alive; and behold he liveth for evermore.* But we may *turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, the buſh burning,* Chriſt ſatisfying divine juſtice: and what in the world ſhould more influence to a holy fear than this?

5. True love will make you to *think well* of him, and think *no evil* of him: *Love thinketh no evil,* ſays the apoſtle. You will entertain good thoughts of God; and

and conſtruct all he does in the beſt ſenſe: though in affliction a ſaint may have harſh thoughts of God, and under a fit of temptation, yet habitually he entertains good thoughts of all God's dealings towards him. This or that diſpenſation or affliction, however ſevere, is either to mortify ſome luſt, or to exerciſe ſome grace, or to diſcover ſome corruption, and remove it. "O! how good is he that will not let me "alone in my ſins, nor let me go with my faults, nor "*ceaſe to be a Reprover!* Love thinks no evil."

6. True love will make you *love* what *he loves*, and *hate* what *he hates;* and alſo love *as* he loves, and hate as he hates.

[1.] True love will make you love what *he loves*, and hate what *he hates;* and particularly to love his friends, and hate his enemies.

1*ſt*, To love his *friends;* his friends in *office*, and his friends in *heart*.

(1.) His friends in *office*; his miniſters, whoſe office it is to commend Chriſt: ſurely they that love God, will love his friends; they that love Chriſt the Bridegroom, will love the friends of the Bridegroom, whoſe work it is to ſet them forth: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the goſpel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things, that publiſh ſalvation!* Iſa. lii. 15. Rom. x. 15. The reaſon why they love ſuch is, becauſe it is their work to open Chriſt's love-letter that is ſent to his bride, and to read it, and explain it to the bride; and becauſe they love the ſweet doctrine of the goſpel. Some pretend a great love to the precepts of the law, but for the doctrine of the goſpel, and free juſtification without the works of the law, they ſuſpect that as Antinomian ſtuff, oppoſite to the law; they will mock at Chriſt's meſſengers when they preach the doctrine of grace. But I ſeek no further evidence of an enemy to Chriſt than that. Some love all preachers, and all preaching alike; they cannot diſcern betwixt the one and the other: if you preach the doctrine of the goſpel to them, they love that; if you preach the covenant of works to them, and deſire them to do ſo and ſo, and there-

thereupon they ſhall be juſtified before God, they love that too; all is fiſh that comes in the net with them: but the ſheep of Chriſt *know his voice;* and the voice of the ſhepherds, that convey his voice and mind to them, is ſweet, and beautiful, and lovely to them.

(2.) They love his friends in *heart*, as well as his friends in office; *the ſaints, the excellent ones of the earth, are theſe in whom is all their delight. He that loves him that begat, loves him that is begotten.* They love the *brethren*, as in the verſe following the text; *How can you ſay that he loves God, whom he hath not ſeen, when he loveth not his brother, whom he hath ſeen?* He that loves the parent, will love the child: they that love God, will love his children, that have his image, as a man will love the very picture of the perſon whom he loves: they love the ſaints, though poor, as a man will love gold, though in a rag; and alſo will love them, though afflicted, even as mettal in a furnace may be loved.

2*dly*, As the true lovers of God will love his friends, ſo they will *hate* his *foes* and *enemies*, whether it be his open enemies without, or his ſecret enemies within.

(1.) His *open enemies without*, even all the wicked and ungodly world; *Do not I hate them that hate thee, and am grieved with them that riſe up againſt thee?* They that can delight in fellowſhip with theſe that are drunkards, ſwearers, and blaſphemers of the name of God, ſurely they cannot have the love of God at leaſt in exerciſe: the true lover of God hates the wicked as ſuch. It is true, as they are the children of Adam, *Bone of their bone, and fleſh of their fleſh;* as they are poor miſerable creatures like themſelves, they love them with a love of pity; but as enemies to God, and in rebellion againſt him, they can have no delight in them; their company is a burthen to them.

(2.) As they hate his open enemies without, ſo they hate his *ſecret enemies within;* and theſe are their own luſts and corruptions. *They hate ſin, who love God*; and are engaged in a warfare againſt ſin, and hate their own luſts. He that loves God hates ſin, whether

ther in *himſelf* or *others*: he hates ſin as God's enemy, and as that which is diſpleaſing and diſhonouring to him; and as that which mars communion with God, that provokes him to anger, and unfits them for his ſervice. O that loathſome, ugly thing ſin! that evil of evils, and devil of devils! The man purſues it to death, and cannot reſt till he gets his hands embrued, as it were, in its heart's blood: they have taken up arms againſt it, in the name of the Lord, and reſolved never to lay them down, till it be mortified and killed. They find indeed ſometimes ſin very lively and ſtrong in them, and themſelves *led captive by the law of ſin*; but this animates them ſo much the more to purſue it to death. And as they hate ſin in themſelves, ſo alſo in others; *I beheld tranſgreſſors, and was grieved.* I would not give much for your pretenſions to love, if you have no zeal againſt ſin; love is the fire, zeal is the flame: they that love the Lord will ſhew forth indignation againſt ſin.——Thus, I ſay, true lovers of God will love what he loves, and hate what he hates.

[2.] True love will not only hate what he hates, and love what he loves, but hate *as* he hates, and love *as* he loves.

1*ſt*, They will *hate* AS *he hates*; they will hate ſin, as God hates it; I ſpeak not of degrees, but of ſimilitude.

(1.) God hates ſin with a *natural* hatred, as oppoſite to his nature, will, and law, and diſhonouring to him; ſo the true lovers of God will hate ſin with a *natural* hatred; I mean, by virtue of his new nature, he will hate it as oppoſite to God's nature and will, and diſhonouring to his God.

(2.) God hates ſin with a *perfect* hatred, and ſo does the true lover of God; they ſay of God's enemies within them, as David, Pſalm cxxxix. 21. *I hate them with a perfect hatred*; their hatred is going on to perfection.

(3.) God hates ſin with an *everlaſting* hatred; he will never be reconciled with it: ſo the true lover of God

God hates ſin with an *everlaſting* hatred; a durable hatred; they will never be friends with it.

(4.) God hates ſin with a *grievous* hatred; ſin *grieves his Spirit;* and is, as it were, a burden to him: he is *preſſed under it as a cart under ſheaves:* ſo the true lover is *grieved with the body of ſin and death,* and preſſed under it.

(5.) God hates ſin with a *parting, ſeparating* hatred; he caſts it away with loathing and abhorrence, *being of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity:* ſo the true lover hates ſin ſo as to *part with it,* and *ſeparate from it:* and while he cannot get himſelf rid of it, he loaths himſelf for it.

(6.) God hates ſin with an *avenging* hatred; he takes vengeance upon it where-ever it is; even when it was found but *imputatively* in Chriſt, he took vengeance upon it in the Surety: ſo the true lover of God hates ſin with an *avenging* hatred; yea, what *revenge* does he meditate againſt it! 2 Cor. vii. 11. He would ſometimes be at Sampſon's work, to pull down the houſe of that tabernacle upon the Philiſtines to be avenged upon it, and cannot reſt till it be deſtroyed: he looks upon himſelf as wretched, ſo long as it remains with him: *O wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this ſin and death?*— Thus he hates as God hates.

2*dly*, They *love* AS *God loves.* It is true God's love to them is infinite, their love is but finite; his love to them is the love of a God, their love to him is but the love of creatures; yet their love bears ſome reſemblance of his love.

(1.) God's love to his creatures is a *remembering* love: he never forgets them; *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, ſhe may; yet will I not forget thee, ſaith the Lord.* So, true love to God is a *remembering* love: they cannot forget God; *they remember his love more than wine. I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou haſt quickened me.* I can never forget ſuch a word, ſuch a glance, ſuch a viſit, ſuch

a day, ſuch a ſermon, ſuch a bank, ſuch a valley, ſuch a chamber, where God manifeſted himſelf.

(2.) God's love to his people is a *hearty* and *cordial* love; *he loves them with all his heart;* ſo, where true love is, it will *be with all the heart, ſoul, mind, and ſtrength: as with the heart man believes*, ſo with the *heart* the believer loves.

(3.) God's love to his people is a *manifeſted* love; he does not conceal his love, but diſcovers it: ſo true love to God will be a *manifeſted* love; it will manifeſt itſelf, and vent itſelf in prayer, in praiſes, in zeal, in obedience; *If you love me keep my commandments.* The true lover will vent his love by deſiring to keep Chriſt's words, keeping them in the heart; *Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I may not offend thee;* keeping them in the practice, *by ordering the converſation aright.*

(4.) God's love to his people is an *uniting* love; it brings them to union with himſelf; ſo true love to God is uniting; deſires union, and cleaves to the Lord; it affects nearneſs; more and more nearneſs; and ſtill more and more nearneſs.

(5.) God's love to his people is a *prevailing* love; it had many hinderances in its way; mountains of guilt, mountains of ſin, mountains of provocation, yet he did not call back his love again: even ſo, true love to God, notwithſtanding of hinderances and oppoſition from earth and hell, and corruption within, yet is not drawn back, but labours to *prevail;* and will, thro' grace, fight its way through all difficulties; *for love is ſtrong as death.*

(6.) God's love to his people is a *rejoicing* love; he rejoiceth in his love; ſo where true love to God is, the man will *rejoice* in his love; delight in God and Chriſt, and *be joyful in the God of his ſalvation.*

(7.) God's love to his people is a *reſting* love; Zeph. v. 17. *He reſts in his love;* when it comes, it never thinks of removing any more; *This is my reſt, here will I ſtay;* ſo where true love to God is, it is a *reſting* love; it ſays, *Return to thy reſt, O my ſoul.* The true lover of God hath no other reſting place but a God in Chriſt.

(8.) God's

(8.) God's love to his people is a *communicative* love; his love inclines him and engages him to make over himſelf, and all that he hath, for the good of his people: ſo, where true love to God is, it is ſuch a *communnicative* love, that it makes the ſoul to give himſelf, and all that he is, and hath, to the Lord; he commits his ſoul, body, and all the concerns of his ſalvation to him.

(9.) God's love to his people is a *diſtinguiſhing* love; he loves them above all others; *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable; and I have loved thee*, Iſa. xliii. 3, 4. So their love to him is *ſuperlative* love; they love him above all things; and in all things he hath the pre-eminence.

(10.) God's love to his people is *in Chriſt;* they are *accepted in the Beloved;* ſo, true love to God is a love to God *in Chriſt;* out of Chriſt they cannot love him, but fear and flee from him: but in Chriſt he is amiable and lovely to them.——Now, by theſe things you may try whether you love God, ſo as your love is a fruit of his firſt loving you.

Uſe of *exhortation.* Is God's love to his people the cauſe of their love to him? then be exhorted, 1. To ſeek the *view* of God's love to you. 2. To render him *love* for *love.*

1. Seek a *view* of God's love to you; ſay not in your heart, Alas! all are not loved of God, and it may be not you; but rather ſay, Many are the objects of his love, and why not me? Why, ſay you, the firſt object of faith cannot be to believe that God hath loved me. Indeed you cannot know God's love to you till he manifeſt the ſame; and he does not manifeſt his love but in Chriſt, in whom is proclaimed *peace on earth, and good-will towards men*, becauſe Chriſt hath brought in *glory to God in the higheſt;* and therefore the way to know the love of God to you, is to believe his love and good-will in him; and in coming to him, the love of God is known and believed. How do the ſaints get to know the love of God to them? It is even by believing his love in Chriſt, 1 John iv. 16. *We have known, and believed the love that God hath to us.*

If you look to God out of Chriſt, you never ſee his love to you, or any ſinner like you, but wrath and vengeance iſſued out againſt you; but if you look to God in Chriſt, then you may ſee good-will towards men; for, *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf.*——Why, ſay you, I cannot find any love in my heart towards God; and therefore, how can I believe his love, or heart to be towards me? Indeed, man, you will never love God till you take up ſomething of his love and good-will towards you; your way of doing is a prepoſterous courſe, and a way to rob God of his glory, to think you muſt love him firſt, and then expect that he will love you: lay down your carnal reaſoning, and ſeek grace to apprehend the mercy of God in Chriſt, and that will open your ſoul to let out your love towards him.——Why, ſay you, I ſee no ground why he ſhould love me! there is no cauſe, no reaſon in the world, but all the reaſon in the world, why he ſhould not love me; and therefore, how can I be perſuaded of his thoughts of love towards me? To this we might reply, That God ſpeaks love, mercy, and good-will towards you man, you woman, by this goſpel, as particularly as ever he did to any elect ſoul, the day before he met with the day of power; for the general tenders of grace in the goſpel are to all: and as for a cauſe of love, he hath as much cauſe to fix his love on you as ever he had upon any of the children of men; that is, he had no cauſe at all *without himſelf*: and if you can attain to believe his grace and good-will towards you, and that by a faith of his own operation, you ſhall not be deceived. When I call you to believe thus, I am not calling you to fancy that God loves you, or to perſuade yourſelves in a natural way; nay, I call you to a *ſaving faith*, which I know you can never attain unto without a pull of omnipotency: and if that power accompany the call, then the duty called to will be put in practice, and not otherwiſe: therefore, O ſeek the power of God to perſuade you of the good-will of God in Chriſt. All that hear me are obliged to receive Chriſt, as a token of God's love;

love; *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him, and receiveth him, might not periſh, but have everlaſting life. He that believeth, ſhall be ſaved: he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* If there be inſuperable difficulties and objections in your way, I cannot help it; the God who calls you, can remove them; but it is at your peril, if you reject his call: you ſhall never have it to ſay in hell, that the good-will and favour of God was never proclaimed to you; for I take the mountains and hills that are in your view, to witneſs, that I proclaim, through Chriſt, *Peace on earth, and good-will towards men;* and that *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf.* Why, would we have the greateſt ſinner, and vileſt debauchee among us all, to believe the love and good-will of God towards them? To this we reply, Whilſt you are in a ſinful ſtate, you are indeed under the wrath and curſe of God; and if you continue therein, you will be damned for ever, as ſure as God lives; and you will continue there for ever, unleſs you come to get the apprehenſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt; but whenever you get this apprehenſion of God's love, then I defy you to continue in a ſtate of ſin, or in a courſe of ſin and enmity. Will a man receive Chriſt, and believe the love of God in him, and yet keep faſt hold of his luſts? No, I defy him, it is not poſſible; and therefore it is to kill your enmity and deſtroy your ſin that God would have you to believe his good-will in Chriſt. I remember that ſtory of a godly man, that ſaid to a witch, when nothing elſe could ſoften her heart, "I do, *ſays* "*he*, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, charge you to "come to Chriſt for ſalvation; to come to him for "faith, repentance, and remiſſion of ſin, and you ſhall "have acceptance, and be received into the favour "of God in him." The poor witch was made to ſay, "O, Sir, ſhall I believe your word? My life for you, "*ſays he*, if you rely upon Chriſt." Immediately her bands were looſed; and the Lord brought her to a deep humiliation for ſin, and ſenſe of the favour of God, ſo as ſhe gave evidence, by the teſtimony of diſcern-

diſcerning perſons, that the Lord had ſhewn mercy to her. O if you knew how the Lord is ſaying to his ſervants, O fy upon you! will you not compel thoſe people to come in and cloſe with Chriſt, as the great pledge of God's love? O! go to God, when you can get an opportunity to be alone, and ſay, Lord, I have been called to believe, but my heart is hard, and thou only can break it: O! come and ſave the chiefeſt of ſinners, whereby thou wilt get more glory than ever thou had by any of Adam's poſterity: cry to him, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.*

2. I would exhort you to render him *love* for *love:* and this exhortation concerns believers particularly. O, love him, becauſe *he firſt loved you.* What a ſhame is it for you, believer, if you do not love him who firſt loved you! And to engage you, conſider,

(1.) Whoſe love it is; it is the love of him, who in himſelf is *all-ſufficient*, who hath no need to go forth with his love to others; the love *of a God*, O what a vaſt conſideration is it!

(2.) Conſider who *you are* that are the objects of of his love; ſo wicked, ſo wretched, ſo unworthy of his love. That God ſhould love the *glorious angels* is no wonder; for they are *meſſengers* and *miniſters executing his pleaſure:* that he ſhould love *inanimate creatures* is not ſtrange; for *hail, ſnow, vapour, and ſtormy wind fulfil his word:* but to love *you* is a wonder; and to love you *while enemies.*

(3.) Conſider what *ſort* of love it is. It is *eternal* love; *before the foundation of the world, his delights were with the ſons of men*, from eternity: the very thoughts of this is enough to make all that is within you, like the babe in the womb of Elizabeth, to leap for joy, that you lay in the boſom of his love from eternity: and will you not love him!—His love is a *free love;* if you deſerved his love, his love would be of leſs value; but that which is eternally antecedent, muſt be abſolutely free.—His love is *unchangeable* love: though you change every day, his love is unchangeable. Could any provocation turn away his love, it had ceaſed long ſince; but as he ſet his love upon you, not-

notwithſtanding all the faults you were, and he knew you would be, guilty of, ſo it continues notwithſtanding all.—His love is a *diſtinguiſhing* love; why ſhould he have fixed on you, and paſſed by millions from whom you differ not by nature? Why hath he paſſed by your father, mother, brother, ſiſter, and ſet his love upon you? And, O! will you not love him?—His love is a *bountiful* love; with his love he gives himſelf, his Chriſt, his Spirit, his grace, his glory, and all. See how the pſalmiſt extols this love, Pſalm ciii. 1. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, who pardons all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diſeaſes*, &c. *Who pardons all thine iniquities!* O, it is no ſmall thing to forgive or to pardon three or four ſins, but it is yet more to pardon three or four thouſand ſins: Who can conceive of that love! but to forgive many millions of faults; O what love is here! And ſo he deals with theſe whom he loves; *He multiplies to pardon;* yea, more, *he heals all your diſeaſes.* O poor ſinner, have you not many plagues, many diſeaſes, yea, more than you are aware of? If you knew the plagues of your own heart, you will be crying out, O the plague of my mind, the plague of my will, the plague of my affections! O my atheiſm, unbelief, hardneſs, blindneſs! *&c.* O what innumerable evils compaſs me about, ſay you! O what horrible evils! yea, why do I call them evils, they are ſo many devils within me; yea, but for as many as they are, *He heals all thy diſeaſes;* and for as grievous as they are, *He ſupplies all your wants:* ſuch alſo is his bountiful love, *My God ſhall ſupply all your wants.* Are you not made up of wants? Do you not want light, life, love, faith, repentance, joy, aſſurance, peace, communion with God? Yea, but ſometimes even on earth he ſupplies all wants, ſo as to make you ſay, *I have enough.* O does not this bountiful love, call for love?

(4.) Conſider the *channel* in which this love runs: Chriſt is the means of the communication of the love of God; you have the love of God the Father, in the Son, by the Holy Ghoſt: Chriſt is the *channel.* Love in the Father is like the honey flower; it muſt be in the

the comb, before it be for our uſe: Chriſt muſt extract and prepare this honey for us. And, O how ſweet is that love, that runs through ſuch a glorious channel!

In a word, conſider the *excellency* of the grace of love. Love to God is the *fulfilling of the law*; all that it requires is *love*; love is the great qualification of the ſaints above; the more love you have, the more like heaven you will be; and the more love, the more meetneſs for heaven: heaven would be a burden, and a wearineſs to you without love; if you had not love, you would throw yourſelf out of heaven into hell. If you have love, you will find it make every duty pleaſant; the obedience of love is ſweet obedience. Yea, love will make all your croſſes to be comforts; where there is little or no love, the croſs is inſupportable; the man cries, O a bitter croſs! *O the gall and wormwood!* yea, but love would be like the tree caſt into the waters of Marah, to make them become ſweet. If you have much love, it will make you ſay of affliction, O this is the cup that my kind Father hath put in my hand! *And ſhall I not drink it?* Welcome whatever he ſends.

O love the Lord, ye his ſaints, and manifeſt your love by your obedience: will you render him hatred for love? O let his love to you warm your heart with love to him; and in order thereto,

1. O do not *doubt* of or *queſtion* his love to you; beware of renouncing that which engages you to love him: it is the devil's great aim to have you miſtruſting God's love, that ſo you may not love God again.

2. Attend all his *love viſits*, and thankfully receive them; think not little of his ordinary viſits, when in any meaſure he manifeſts his love through the lattices of ordinances; *Deſpiſe not the day of ſmall things*; and eſpecially, O make much of his extraordinary love-viſits, when he mounts you up at any time into the *chariot paved with love!*

3. Take heed of *abuſing* his love: beware of *ſpotting your garments with the fleſh, after God has ſpread his ſkirt over you.* To ſin againſt love is a dreadfully aggra-

aggravated ſin. It was a ſad blot upon Solomon, that his heart was turned from the Lord, *After that the Lord God of Iſrael had appeared to him twice*, 1 Kings xi. 9.

4. Beware of *confidence in the fleſh*, and expecting that your love ſhould influence God to do you good; *the love of Chriſt muſt conſtrain you;* think not that your duties and obedience ſhould conſtrain him: O beware of inverting the goſpel at this rate, and turning it upſide down! If his love excite you to love and obedience, then your love and obedience does not excite him to love you. We might fear every day, that the heart of God would be turned to hate us, if our hopes of abiding in his favour were built upon our beſt love and obedience.

I would ſend away the *haters* of God with a word of *terror*. Know that if you cannot be perſuaded to the love of God, if his love does not break you in time, his vengeance will break you to eternity: *The enemies of the Lord ſhall be like the fat of rams, they ſhall conſume; into ſmoke ſhall they conſume away.* If you love not Chriſt, know what the apoſtle ſays, *If a man love not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema.* I will tell you what is ſad, the day is coming, wherein you ſhall ſay *to the rocks and mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who ſhall be able to ſtand?* You will ly for ever under the fiery mountain of divine vengeance. I will tell you what is yet ſadder, and you will think ſtrange what that can be; in ſhort it is ſad, that before this day eight days, all that I am ſaying will be forgotten; yea, before the morrow at this time, the impreſſion of all will be gone.

I would ſend away the lovers of Chriſt, the lovers of God with a word of *comfort*. You love God, and God loves you, and God's love to you is ground of comfort.—Comfort in what you *have;* what you have in poſſeſſion, you have it with a *bleſſing;* what you have in expectation in the promiſe, is in love; and therefore the promiſe is free, becauſe of God's love in it; the promiſe is firm, becauſe of his love in it.—

Comfort in what you *want;* ſince you have God's love, *you ſhall not want.*—Comfort in what you *fear; You need fear no evil.*—Comfort in what you *do; All your ſervices will be accepted;* all your ſins pardoned, tho' he ſhould *take vengeance on your inventions.*—Comfort in what you *ſuffer;* you ſhall be ſuſtained and ſupported; and though you may ſuffer the loſs of gifts, goods, liberty, life, yet you cannot loſe God, Chriſt, the Spirit, grace, heaven, or God's everlaſting love.——O go away with the comfortable ſenſe of his diſtinguiſhing love!

In a word, Are you lovers of God? O go away *rejoicing* in it, *that he firſt loved you;* he is not behind hand with you; *He loved you before you loved him.* You were elected by the grace of God from eternity; you were redeemed by the blood of Chriſt, you are certainly effectually called; *For they that love him are the called according to his purpoſe;* and the day comes, when you ſhall enjoy the object of your love in a full manner. If you be true lovers of Chriſt, I certify you, the time is coming, when you ſhall ſee *Chriſt as he is, and be for ever with the Lord,* and enjoy him for evermore; and love without decay, and love without wearying ſhall be your everlaſting exerciſe: you ſhall rejoice in an immediate enjoyment of him. You were upon his heart from eternity; you are upon his heart this day in heaven, for you his eternal Son came to the world; for you he lived, for you he died; your love to Chriſt is a reflex of his and his Father's love to you; and there is not a true lover of Chriſt here, but hath as good ground to ſay as ever Paul had, *He loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* Your love to him is an infallible pledge of his ancient love to you, a pledge of his preſent love to you, and a pledge of the future enjoyment of him. O let your heart, and life, and tongue, and all that is within you, and about you, vent love to him, and ſay, *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us!*

SERMON

SERMON XIX*.

The MILITANT's SONG; or, the BELIEVER's EXERCISE while here below.

PSALM ci. 1.

I will ſing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing.

I HOPE, the ſubject I am here in providence directed to, will natively lead us, if the Lord bleſs it, to a ſuitable exerciſe upon a thankſgiving-day after a communion; even with gratitude of ſoul to ſing the praiſes of a God in Chriſt, and that whether we have met with a ſmile or a frown from heaven, or both, at this occaſion. If any here have got a ſmile, or found him to be a ſmiling and a preſent God, they may ſing of *mercy;* if any here have got a frown, or found him to be a hiding God, they may ſing of *judgmeut;* or, if any here have got both a ſmile and a frown, they may ſing of both, and ſay, *I will ſing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing.*

The words contain the pſalmiſt's *holy reſolution* to praiſe and glorify God for all his diſpenſations towards him, now that he was advanced to the kingdom of Iſrael: and in them you may ſhortly notice, 1. The *ſweet work* that is reſolved upon, namely, *to ſing.* 2. The ſweet *ſinger* that thus reſolves, namely, DAVID;

* This ſermon was preached at Carnock, on Monday, July ----, 1723, being a thankſgiving day, immediately after the celebration of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper there; and hath already undergone ſix impreſſions.

I will ſing. 3. The ſweet *ſubject* of the ſong, namely, *mercy* and *judgment.* 4. The ſweet *object* of this praiſe, and the manner in which he would ſing it; *Unto* THEE, *O* LORD, *will I ſing.*

1. The ſweet *work* that is reſolved upon, namely, to *ſing.* It is the work of heaven, and a very fit work after a communion, to ſing a ſong of praiſe to God, in the manner which we may afterwards explain.

2. The ſweet *ſinger; I will ſing.* The title of the pſalm ſhews it was David's, the man after God's own heart; the man anointed by the God of Jacob, and the ſweet pſalmiſt of Iſrael; for ſo he is called, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

3. The ſweet *ſubject* of the ſong, or the matter of it, namely, *mercy* and *judgment.* God's work towards his people is chequered work; a mixture of mercy and judgment: and when he exerciſes us with both, it is our duty to ſing of both, and to be ſuitably affected with both; whether our circumſtances be joyful or ſorrowful, ſtill we muſt *give glory to God;* and, *in every thing give thanks:* neither the laughter of a proſperous condition, nor the tears of an afflicted condition muſt put us out of tune for the ſacred ſongs of praiſe.

4. The ſweet *object* of this praiſe, and the manner in which he reſolves to ſing it, *Unto* THEE, *O* LORD, *will I ſing.* It is in the moſt ſolemn manner that he addreſſes the Lord JEHOVAH, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, and dedicates his ſong to the praiſe of a God in Chriſt; *Unto* THEE, *O* LORD, *will I ſing.* But I refer the further explication to the proſecution of a doctrine from the words.

OBSERV. *That, as the people of God hath both mercy and judgment in their lot in this world; ſo, from both they may have matter of a ſong of praiſe unto God.*

They have occaſion in this world to ſing both of mercy and judgment. We find the pſalmiſt frequently ſinging both of mercy and judgment; as Pſalm xxx. 6,—9. Pſalm xlii. 7, 11. You have an elegant deſcription

ſcription of the lot of God's people, while here, as conſiſting both of mercy and judgment, and ſo affording occaſion to ſing of both, 2 Corinth. vi. 8, 9, 10.; where you will ſee the blink and the ſhower; the mercies and judgments that are in their lot; how *God hath ſet the one over againſt the other; By honour and diſhonour, by evil report and good report*, &c. Thus they have occaſion to ſing both of mercies and croſſes, while they find the Lord ſupporting them under trials, and remembring mercy in the midſt of wrath, and making *all things work together for good to them; I will ſing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing.* The Chaldee paraphraſe of this text is remarkable, and ſuitable to the doctrine I have raiſed from it, namely, it is as if the pſalmiſt had ſaid, 'If thou 'beſtowed mercies upon me: or if thou bringeſt any 'judgment upon me; before thee, O Lord, will I ſing 'my hymn for all.'

The method I propoſe, for proſecuting this doctrine, through divine aid, is the following,

I. I would ſpeak a little of the *mercies* that the people of God meet with; and what it is *in* theſe that affords them matter of a ſong of praiſe.

II. I would ſpeak a little of the *judgments* they are triſted with; and what it is *in* judgment that may be matter of a ſong of praiſe to God.

III. What this finging *imports*; and *how* we are to ſing of *mercy* and *judgment*: where we may notice what is imported in the pſalmiſt's *reſolution*, and the *manner* of expreſſing it; *I will ſing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing.*

IV. *Why* it is ſo ordered of the Lord, that his people are made to ſing, both of mercy, and of judgment.

V. Draw ſome *inferences* for the application.

I. I am *firſt* to ſpeak a little of *mercy*, of which they ought to ſing; and here I would ſhew, 1. What this mercy *is*; and, 2. What it is *in* mercy that may be matter of a ſong, or afford ground of finging.

1*ſt*, What

1*ſt*, What this mercy *is*. Mercy, in God, ſignifies a propenſity or readineſs of mind to help and ſuccour ſuch as are in miſery: and it carries in it an inward commotion and moving of bowels, as God ſays of Ephraim, *My bowels are troubled for him; I will ſurely have mercy upon him*, Jer. xxxi. 20. God, to accomodate himſelf to our capacity, ſpeaks after the manner of man, aſcribing human affections to himſelf. I might here ſpeak of the *general* mercy of God towards all, both juſt and unjuſt: for, *He is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Pſal. cxlv. 9. He makes his *ſun to ſhine, and his rain to fall upon good and bad*: and all ſhould ſing of his mercy, if it were no more but for life, and health, and ſtrength from him. There are ſome common gifts that all men have from him, and ſome common graces that ſome have more than others; but I ſpeak eſpecially of ſpecial mercies; and indeed there are of theſe, that the viſible church hath, beſides the reſt of the world, even the wicked among them; and, if they could, they ſhould ſing of theſe mercies; ſuch as, their hearing the goſpel, and the joyful ſound; their getting the offer of Chriſt, and ſalvation through him: but I ſpeak mainly of the ſpecial mercies, that bear the ſtamp of his everlaſting love towards his choſen and hidden ones: mercy bred in God's breaſt from all eternity, whereby he made choice of ſome of the fallen maſs of mankind in Chriſt, who is the channel wherein this mercy does flow in various ſtreams: and I ſhall mention a few of theſe, for there would be no end of ſpeaking, to mention all that might be ſaid, or yet to enlarge upon all that may be mentioned.

1. There is the mercy of God, in *ſending Chriſt to be the Saviour*. We find the angels ſinging of this mercy, Luke ii. 11, 14. ſaying, *To you is born in the city of David, a Saviour; Glory to God in the higheſt, on earth peace, and good-will towards men*. *Good-will* and *mercy* towards *man*, becauſe there is *peace on earth*, and reconciliation through Chriſt, who brings in *glory to God in the higheſt; God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould*

ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life, John iii. 16. It is indeed a *ſo* without a *ſuch*; a love without a parallel: here mercy ſhines.

2. There is mercy in the *death of Chriſt*; ſee how the four and twenty elders ſing of this mercy; *Thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt made us to our God kings and prieſts*: and the angels join iſſue with them, to the number of *ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands, ſaying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing*, Rev. v. 9,—12.

3. There is a mercy that he ſhews, in *raiſing of Chriſt from death*, and in *raiſing and quickening us together with him*. We find the apoſtle ſinging of this mercy; *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt, and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus*, Eph. ii. 4, 5. If Chriſt muſt die, he muſt conquer death, that his people may be *more than conquerors* in him over death; both *ſpiritual* death, whereby we were under the *power* of ſin; and *legal* death, whereby we were under the *guilt* of ſin, and ſentence of the law. In oppoſition to both theſe, the life of regeneration, and the life of juſtification is connected with this merciful quickening together with Chriſt; as you ſee, Col. ii. 13. *You, being dead in your ſins and the uncircumciſion of your fleſh, hath he quickened together with him; having forgiven you all treſpaſſes.* O how does the pſalmiſt ſing of this mercy! *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul,—who forgiveth all thy ſins, and healeth all thy diſeaſes*, Pſalm ciii. 2, 3.

4. There is mercy that he ſhews, in *cleanſing the ſoul* from the *filth* of ſin, as well as the *guilt* thereof, till it be waſhed and made quite clean at laſt. See how the ſaints do ſweetly ſing of this mercy, Rev. i. 7. where I think they ſing both of pardoning and purifying

fying mercy; *To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.*

5. There is mercy that he shews, in *adopting such heirs of hell* by nature, to be the *children of God* by grace: and you may see how believers sing of this mercy; *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!* 1 John iii. 1. He makes them his children, and gives them the Spirit of adoption; *Because ye are sons, he hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying,* ABBA, *Father.* He gives them the mark and seal of his children, even the Spirit as a Spirit of prayer, and as a Spirit of faith, and a Spirit of love, working the love of God in our hearts, who are by nature enemies: and, O what mercy is here!

6. There is mercy that he shews, in conferring the high dignity of *priesthood* and *royalty* upon them; see how they sing of this mercy; *To him that loved us,—and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father* [or, *to God, even his Father;*] *to him be glory,* Rev. i. 5, 6. *Kings unto God,* how? Even to fight for him against sin, Satan, and the world, and conquer all our enemies in his name. *Priests unto God,* how? Even to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; to offer our prayers and praises, souls and bodies to him, on our altar, Jesus Christ. Thus they are made *kings and priests;* and therefore called a *royal priesthood:* a priesthood of kings, or a kingdom of priests.

7. There is mercy that he shews his people, in *abiding* and *standing by them in all difficulties,* so as nothing shall ever be able to *separate them from the favour of their God.* See how sweetly the apostle Paul sings of this mercy; *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distresses, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—Nay, I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ*

Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, Rom. viii. 35,—39. But tho' neither *death*, nor *life*, nor *angels* do it, yet may not *ſin* ſeparate me from the mercy and love of God? Indeed it may ſeparate, ſo as to make a fearful deſertion, but never ſo as to make a final ſeparation; for, *His mercy endures for ever:* and he hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.* He *will viſit their iniquity with the rod,—but his loving-kindneſs will he not take away. My mercy will I keep with him for evermore, and my covenant ſhall ſtand faſt with him*, Pſal. lxxxix. 28, 32, 33.

8. There is mercy that he ſhews, in giving many *merciful experiences* of his *goodneſs and mercy following them all the days of their life;* ſuch as the pſalmiſt ſings of, Pſalm xxiii. 6. It is true, the leading mercy of all, is God himſelf, Chriſt himſelf, the Spirit himſelf; one God in three Perſons, is their God; made over to them in that word, *I will be your God.* Here is the fountain-mercy of all mercies, of which they may ſing, ſaying, *This God is our God for ever and ever, and will be our guide, even unto death.* And indeed to ſing of mercy, is to ſing of a merciful God: but as we know the nature of the fountain by the ſweetneſs of the ſtreams, ſo we may take a view of ſome more of theſe ſtreams, under the notion of merciful experiences; and I name theſe following, by which a ſong of mercy may be excited.

(1.) There are merciful *intimations* and *communications*, that they ſometimes get, to make them ſing of mercy. Sometimes he imtimates his *love*, ſaying, *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love:* Sometimes he intimates *pardon*, ſaying, *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions, and will remember thy ſins no more:* Sometimes he intimates *acceptance*, ſaying, *O man, greatly beloved;* and the intimation ſets them a wondering and praiſing: Sometimes he communicates his *mind* and his *ſecrets* to them, *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew unto them his covenant:* Sometimes the ſecrets of his *providence;* he will tell them what he hath a-mind to do with themſelves, and what he hath a-mind to do with ſuch a

friend, and ſuch a child, and ſuch a land or church; *Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do?* Sometimes he communicates himſelf to them, ſaying, *I am thy God, I am thy ſhield; Fear not, for I am with thee:* Sometimes ſuch intimations and communications are given, as make all their bones to ſay, *Who is like unto thee?*

(2.) There are merciful *viſits* after deſertion, and after backſliding, that they ſometimes get to make them ſing of mercy, when they have been heaping up mountains of ſin and provocation betwixt him and them; yet, after all, he hath come and given them occaſion to ſay, *The voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh ſkipping upon the mountains, and leaping upon the hills*, Cant. ii. 8. *The voice of my Beloved!* O an exceeding ſweet and powerful voice! It had a ſound of heaven; I thought the mountains would have kept him away, but I heard the ſound of his feet upon the mountains, that made my heart warm toward him again; I had departed from him by an evil heart of unbelief, and I thought he would never return; but, O he reſtored my ſoul, and helped me anew to wreſtle with him: *We found him in Bethel, and there he ſpake with us.*

(3.) There are merciful *accompliſhments of promiſes*, that they ſometimes get, to make them ſing of mercy. The Lord ſometimes lets in a promiſe with life and power, and gives them a word on which he *cauſes them to hope.* It may be he will give them a promiſe for *themſelves*, and it may be a promiſe for their *children*; ſuch as that, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy ſeed*; and ſometimes a promiſe for the *church*; ſuch as that, *Upon all the glory there ſhall be a defence*: and ſometimes he gives a wonderful *accompliſhment of promiſes*, like that of Hezekiah; *What ſhall I ſay? he hath both ſpoken, and himſelf hath done it*: He hath come to my ſoul, and made me ſee that he is as good as his word; and that *faithfulneſs is the girdle of his loins.*

(4.) There is a merciful *grant of all their deſires*, that they ſometimes get, to make them ſing of mercy. As the *deſire of their ſoul is towards him, and the remembrance of his name*; ſo *he ſatisfies the longing ſoul, and*

and fills the hungry with good things; and gives them ſometimes a Chriſt in their arms, who is *all their ſalvation, and all their deſire*: *Delight thyſelf in the Lord, and he will give thee the deſire of thy heart.* Some have got their deſires ſatisfied abundantly, now and then; they have got all that they could deſire with reſpect to temporal mercies; all that they could deſire with reſpect to ſpiritual mercies; yea, all that they could deſire within time, till they get an armful of him before the throne.

(5.) There is merciful *inſtruction* and *illumination*, that they ſometimes get, to make them ſing of mercy; *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, ſhining more and more unto the perfect day.* And therefore he gives them to learn ſome leſſon more and more; ſome goſpel-leſſon, and goſpel-myſtery, that they were in the dark about: and one great leſſon that he teaches them is, even the difference betwixt the *law* and the *goſpel;* he teaches them, that the *law is holy, juſt, and good*; and how the goſpel crowns the law in all theſe reſpects: he teaches, that the law is *holy* in its *commands*, commanding perfect holineſs, perfect obedience; and how the goſpel ſhews where this perfect obedience is to be had, even in Chriſt, in whom they have not only ſtrength to anſwer it as a rule of duty in part, but perfect righteouſneſs to anſwer it as a covenant of works completely: he teaches them, that the law is *juſt* in its *threatening*, the threatening of eternal death; and how the goſpel ſhews where this threatening hath vented itſelf, even in demanding and getting complete ſatisfaction from Chriſt the Surety; and therefore may the ſoul ſay, Well is me, for the ſhower of wrath is over my head, and hath lighted upon the head of my Cautioner! He teaches them, that the law is *good* in its *promiſes*, namely, its promiſe of eternal life to perfect perſonal obedience: but withal he teaches them by the goſpel, how they hold their title to life, only in Chriſt, to whoſe perfect obedience now all the promiſes are made, and *in whom all the promiſes are Yea and Amen.* O what a mercy is it to learn theſe leſſons in a ſaving way; *To you it is given*

to know the myſteries of the kingdom of God: he hath hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed them to babes; even ſo, Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.

(6.) There are merciful *ſenſible enjoyments*, which they ſometimes get, to make them ſing of mercy; ſometimes they get ſenſible ſights of his glory, and that in a way of believing; *Said I not unto thee, If thou wouldſt believe, thou ſhouldſt ſee the glory of God?* O ſays the man, I found faith to be the hardeſt thing in the world, and yet he made me find it to be the eaſieſt thing in the world, when he carried me on the wings of the Spirit of faith; and by faith I ſaw his glory, and the glory of God in the face of Jeſus. When I ſpeak of *ſenſible ſight*, do not miſtake me; for I know that faith and ſight, or faith and ſenſe, differ in ſeveral reſpects, which I am not now to open; and yet faith brings in a kind of ſenſe, it being *the evidence of things not ſeen, and the ſubſtance of things hoped for*; and therefore, by a *ſenſible ſight*, I mean, the *ſpiritual ſenſe of ſeeing by faith*, and *ſeeing clearly*; for ſometimes the man gets a ſight of Chriſt, as clearly as if he ſaw him with his bodily eyes: O, ſays the man, I have ſeen his fulneſs and ſufficiency; I ſee his fitneſs and ſuitableneſs for me; I ſee his worthineſs and excellency in himſelf. O none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt; as once a martyr, ſtanding at a poſt, and having matches kindled upon him, and the flames about his finger-ends, he clapped his hands together, and cried, *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.*

Some men they get ſenſible *taſtes* of his *goodneſs*; *I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.* O how ſweetly did I feed upon the apple-tree, and plucked off the apples that grew upon this tree, the apple of imputed righteouſneſs, the apple of imparted grace, the apple of peace, the apple of pardon, the apple of aſſurance, the apple of joy, the apple of contentment, the apple of love, the apple of liberty! O the ſweet fruit, the ſweet apples that grow upon this tree of life! *I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight*, &c.

Some-

Sometimes they get a ſenſible *hearing* of his *voice;* like that in the Song, *It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh*, Song v. 2. He knocked by his voice, ſaying, *Open to me, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe.* O ſweet was his voice, when he ſaid to me, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee!* How ſweet was his voice, when he ſaid, *Be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee!* when he ſaid a word like that of the angel, *Fear not, Mary, for thou haſt found favour with God! Did not my heart burn within me, when he talked with me by the way?* In ſuch a word, and at ſuch a ſacrament, and ſuch an ordinance, and ſuch a duty? *Never man ſpake like this Man.* It was the voice of a God that I heard; for it was with ſuch a glance of glory, as ſet my heart all in a flame of fire.

Sometimes they get a ſenſible *ſmell* of his *ointments.* O! his *name* had a ſmell of heaven; for, *becauſe of the ſavour of his good ointment, his name was as ointment poured forth.* O! his *garments* had a ſmell of heaven; *all his garments ſmell of aloes, myrrh, and Caſſia, out of the ivory palaces.* The garment of his *righteouſneſs* had a ſmell; it is a *ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour;* and the perfume thereof puts away the ſtinking ſmell of ſin: the garment of his *graces* had a ſmell, when the Spirit breathed upon them, and the north and ſouth-wind awakened, the ſpices ſent forth a pleaſant ſmell; when the Spirit warmed my cold heart in duties, and *fire from heaven kindled the ſacrifice*, then it mounted up to heaven, *like a pillar of ſmoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincenſe, and all the powders of the merchant.*

Sometimes they get a ſenſible *feeling* of his *power;* they have felt a ſweet power coming along with the word, the ſacrament, the prayer, the duty, that hath ſet a lawful captive at liberty, and looſed their bands; *Truly I am thy ſervant, thou haſt looſed my bands*, Pſal. cxvi. 16. O ſays the man, At ſuch a time I am quit of the band of fear, I am quit of the band of unbelief, I am quit of the band of doubts, I am quit of the band of corruption; a power hath come, and knocked

off

off my fetters: I felt his hand paſſing through the hole of the door of my heart, and my bowels were moved for him; he ſaid to me, as it were to unbeleving Thomas, *Reach hither thy hand, and put into the hole of my ſide*, and let my wounds ſilence all your faithleſs fears, diſcouragements, and jealouſies; and I was obliged to cry out, *My Lord, and my God.* I thought he took me, as it were, by the hand, as he did Peter upon the water, ready to ſink, ſaying, *O why didſt thou doubt?* He ſhed abroad his love upon my heart ſo ſweetly, that I could doubt no more. I could have been content that the valley of viſion had been my burial-place, and that I had never gone back to the world again; for his love raviſhed my heart, and ſtruck the bottom out of all my doubts and fears: I got all my backſlidings healed; I got all my prayers anſwered; I got my burdens eaſed; I got grace to pour out my ſoul into his boſom; I got grace to bring all my corruptions to him, to be daſhed to pieces; I got grace to creep into his heart, and hide myſelf in his wounds; I got grace to caſt all my burdens over upon him, and my heart was lightened; and my ſoul was more eaſed and pleaſed, than if I had been a crowned emperor of all the kingdoms of the world.—Theſe are ſome of the merciful experiences that ſometimes they will get, to make them ſing of mercy. I might have mentioned many more to this purpoſe, both of ordinary and extraordinary mercies; but I go on,

2*dly*, To the *ſecond* queſtion here propoſed, *What it is* IN *mercy that affords ground of ſinging?*

1. The *freeneſs* and *undeſervedneſs* of the mercy, makes them ſing of mercy: when the man deſerves hell, and the juſt ſentence of the law to be paſt againſt him, mercy comes and takes hold of him. What is the cauſe of mercy? There is nothing in man to merit it but miſery; which is indeed the occaſion that God takes, to manifeſt his mercy through Chriſt; but yet miſery cannot be the cauſe of mercy; for neither merit nor miſery can be conſidered here to have any cauſal influence, it is juſt abſolute ſovereignty; *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God*

God that ſheweth mercy. Sovereign mercy is a thing that can neither be obtained by any good, nor hindered by any evil about us; he gives no account of his dealings: *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.* He loves, and we ſhall be loved: let all our high imaginations and proud reaſonings ſtrike ſail to the ſovereignty of free grace. O ſhall I not ſing of mercy, that when I deſerved a hell, I got a heaven! I, deſerved eternal death, and I got a ſweet view of eternal life! This accents the praiſes. *O what am I,—that thou haſt brought me hitherto?*

2. The *unexpectedneſs* of the mercy, makes them ſing of mercy: O! when I was expecting a frown, I got a ſmile; when I was expecting nothing but wrath, I got a glance of love; inſtead of a ſtroak of vengeance, I got a view of glory. Hezekiah got a meſſage of death, and was looking for it, when he got the news of life, and it made him ſing of mercy, Iſaiah xxxviii. 15. The mercy of God is ſurprizing mercy; ſome have gone diſconſolate and caſt down to an ordinance, and ere ever they were aware, their ſouls have got ſomething, which hath cauſed them to cry, *O! is this the manner of man, O Lord?* Some have gone to a cloſet, or a field, or a barn, or perhaps to a dike-ſide, with little or no expectation; but behold they have been ſurprized with an armful of heaven; perhaps at ſuch a ſermon, they have been ſurprized with a word of love on the back of deep humiliation, or deſertion: a word, like a live-coal, hath been caſt in, and ſet their breaſt on fire, and their heart in a flame.

3. The *ſeaſonableneſs* of the mercy, makes them ſing of mercy; for, he comes with grace to help in time of need; *I was brought low, and he helped me;* I was brought to the brink of ruin, and the border of deſpair, when mercy ſtept in for my relief and comfort: when I was at the loweſt extremity, he ſtept in, and made it the ſweeteſt time that ever I ſaw; *He brought me out of the horrible pit, and ſet my feet upon a rock, and put a new ſong in my mouth, even praiſes unto our God. He pitied us in our low eſtate, for his mercy endureth for ever.*

4. The

4. The *greatneſs* and *riches* of the mercy, makes them ſing, ſaying, *O how great is thy goodneſs, which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, which thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee, before the ſons of men!* Pſal. xxxi. 19. We read of the *riches of his mercy;* the *exceeding riches of his grace;* his people ſometimes meet with exceeding rich favour; ſuch as not only exceeds their worth infinitely, but even exceeds their ſenſe, exceeds their thoughts, exceeds their words, exceeds their deſires, exceeds their prayers, exceeds their praiſes, exceeds all that they can aſk or think; and this makes them ſing. We read of his *abundant mercy;* it is abundant in reſpect of its *fountain;* for his mercy is his nature, and muſt be infinite: it is abundant in reſpect of its *ſtreams*, as it is let out abundantly towards the *object* thereof: it is abundantly great in reſpect of its *various kinds*, temporal mercy, ſpiritual mercy, eternal mercy; *temporal* mercy makes them ſing, and ſay, *I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy mercies; ſpiritual* mercy makes them ſing, and ſay, *He hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus; eternal* mercy makes them ſing and rejoice in *the hope of the glory of God.* O how abundant are they in their kinds, outward and inward mercies! *Outward* mercies are abundant: O the mercy that attended my birth, my education, the place of my ſituation in the world, ſo as to be brought under the drop of the goſpel; my preſervation from innumerable dangers; my protection, my proviſion; he hath fed me all my life long. *Inward* mercies are abundant; the mercy that appeared in my being awakened, convinced, humbled, converted, confirmed, comforted, called, juſtified, adopted, ſanctified. O what ground of ſinging of mercy! It is great and abundant in reſpect of the *qualities* of it: O what matter of ſinging might be gathered out of the views of mercy, as it is preventing mercy, ſparing mercy, condeſcending mercy, covering mercy, tender mercy, waiting mercy, conſtraining mercy, reſtraining mercy, reſtoring mercy, following mercy! Even when I fled away from mercy, mercy and goodneſs followed me.

But

But the bare mentioning of all would be impracticable; O the greatneſs of the mercy of which they may ſing! O the greatneſs of the *Author* of it, a great God! If we be ſaved, what does he get? if we be damned, what does he loſe? yet he ſhews mercy. O the greatneſs of the *object* of it! it is extended towards the chief of ſinners. O the greatneſs of the *effects* of it! Hereby great ſins are pardoned, great bleſſings are conferred, great wrath is averted, and great ſalvation is obtained: O! how can they but ſing of mercy! O the greatneſs of the *attendants* and *companions* of it! It makes them ſing, not only when they notice the mercy, but the contents concomitants of it, and what comes along with it: how ſweetly will the ſoul ſing, when it can ſay, I not only got ſuch a mercy, but I ſaw God in it, and Chriſt in it, and the Spirit in it, and heaven in it, and glory in it! O! how ſweet, when they conſider this favour hath a neceſſary connection with heaven! it is a fore-taſte of what I ſhall enjoy for ever: it is connected with God's everlaſting love. And hence,

5. Not only the greatneſs, but the *ſweetneſs* of the mercy makes them ſing. And there are two things, among many others, that make it ſweet to them, namely, the *excellency* of the mercy itſelf, and then their *relation* to it. On the one hand, the *excellency* of the mercy; *How excellent is thy loving kindneſs, O Lord! Thy favour is better than life. His mouth is moſt ſweet,* ſays the church: *The words of his mouth are ſweeter than honey, or the honey-comb.* On the other hand, their *relation* to the mercy, contributes to the ſweetneſs of it; the more of faith's application, the more ſweet. O ſays faith, there is a promiſe, and it is mine; there is a pardon, and it is mine; there is a robe of righteouſneſs, and it is mine; there is a crown of glory, and it is mine; there is a God, and he is mine; all is mine, becauſe Chriſt is mine. O then he ſings of mercy. But,

6. To name no more, The *ſureneſs and firmneſs* of the mercy makes them ſing; they are called the *ſure*

mercies of David, Isa. lv. 3. The Septuagint renders it as the apostle does, Acts xiii. 34. τὰ ὅσια Δαβὶδ, the *holy*, *just*, and *faithful* † *things of David*. The mercies of God in Christ, our mystical David, are his *holy*, *just*, *and faithful things*; his holiness, justice, and faithfulness are concerned to make good and secure his mercy to them that believe. Hence it is said of believing penitents, 1 John i. 9. that *God is faithful and just to forgive him his sins*. Faithfulness hath a respect to God's promise, and justice a respect to the price and ransom paid by Christ: and God hath bound himself; he is bound by his own faithfulness, on the one hand, he will be faithful to his word of promise; and he is bound by his own justice on the other hand, which is fully satisfied in Christ: he is thus obliged to give out mercy, and secure it for the believer; this makes it indeed the *sure mercies of David*; and so they are eternally secured, and therefore everlasting mercies. In a word, the thing that makes them sing of mercy is, When then they see the mercy to bear in it the tokens of God's love; when they find such a mercy is not only the answer of prayer, but the fruit of God's electing grace; when they see God's ever-everlasting love to be the fountain from whence it flows, Christ's everlasting righteousness the channel in which it runs, and the powerful operation of the Spirit making the effectual conveyance and application of all.—Now, these are some of the mercies, and the things in these mercies, both more ordinary and extraordinary, that are ground of singing: *I will sing of mercy*. But to the other part of the song.

II. The *second* thing was, to speak of the *judgments* that the Lord's people meet with; and what it is *in* judgment that may be matter of a song of praise unto God. To sing of mercy is what I understand, may you say; but how to sing of judgment, I want to know. Here then I would follow the same method as in the former head, namely, 1. To speak of some of these *judgments* they may meet with. 2. What it is *in* judg-

† τὰ πιστὰ

judgment that may be matter of a ſong of praiſe to God.

1*ſt*, Now, as to the *firſt* of theſe, *viz.* The *judgments* of which they are to ſing; in order to clear this, you would know, that the word *judgment* hath various ſanctifications in ſcripture; I ſhall name ſome of theſe.

1. *Judgment* ſometimes ſignifies (when ſpoken with relation to *man*) *underſtanding* and *equity:* ſometimes it ſignifies *underſtanding*, and a faculty of *diſcerning*, in oppoſition to *ignorance; I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all* JUDGMENT, Phillip. i. 9. Sometimes it ſignifies *equity*, in oppoſition to *injuſtice; I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his houſhold after him, that they keep the ways of the Lord, and do juſtice and* JUDGMENT, Gen. xviii. 19. Now, though the doing judgment thus, and that with an underſtanding heart, be be one of the ways by which we are to ſing the praiſes of God, and glorify him, of which more afterwards; yet other things are here intended. Therefore,

2. *Judgment* (when ſpoken of with relation to *God*) ſignifies ſeveral other things; as,

(1.) It ſometimes ſignifies God's *juſt* and *righteous government of the world*, particularly by Chriſt Jeſus; *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all* JUDGMENT *to the Son*, John v. 22. *Righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of his throne;* and that both in the iron rod, by which he takes vengeance on his enemies; and in the golden ſceptre, by which he rules his own people. And indeed, whatever be intended in the text, this government of Chriſt is matter of a ſong of praiſe; *The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; the Lord reigns, let the earth be glad.* But,

(2.) *Judgment* ſometimes ſignifies the *rectitude* of *Chriſt's adminiſtration*, in his reforming the world, and bringing things in order, which ſin and Satan had put into confuſion; ſo may that word be underſtood, John ix. 34. *For* JUDGMENT *am I come into this world:* and again, *Now is the* JUDGMENT *of this world; now ſhall the prince of this world be caſt out.* Of this *judg-*

ment alſo will the believer ſing, when the Spirit is come to convince, as of *ſin* and *righteouſneſs*, ſo alſo of *judgment; becauſe the prince of this world is judged.* But,

(3.) *Judgment* ſometimes ſignifies the *precepts of the law*, as ye know they are frequently called, God's teſtimonies and *judgments*, eſpecially, Pſal. cxix. And when a man learns theſe in a goſpel-way, they are matter of a ſong of praiſe alſo, Pſal. cxix. 7. *I will praiſe thee with uprightneſs of heart, when I have learned thy righteous* JUDGMENTS. Yea, they delight therein, and ſing of theſe *judgments*, Pſalm cxix. 54. *Thy ſtatutes have been my ſong in the houſe of my pilgrimage.*

(4.) *Judgment* ſometimes ſignifies the *doctrine of the goſpel; I will put my Spirit upon him, and he ſhall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles*, Matt. xii. 18. It is cited out of Iſaiah xlii. 1. *He ſhall ſhew judgment to the Gentiles;* that is, He will publiſh the goſpel; the way and method of ſalvation, which he came, as a Prophet, to teach and proclaim; as a Prieſt, to work out; and as a King, to apply; and if we ſhould take *judgment* in this ſenſe, ſurely all believers ſing of judgment, whenever faith is in exerciſe; for the goſpel is the ſong of the ſaints; it is the joyful ſound, while with joy they draw water out of this well of ſalvation. Pſal. lxxxix. 15. Iſa. xii. 3.

(5.) It ſometimes ſignifies the *puniſhment inflicted upon Chriſt*, when he ſubſtitute himſelf in our room; *He was taken from priſon and from* JUDGMENT; or, as it may be rendered, and as you will ſee in the margin of ſome of your Bibles, *He was taken away* BY DISTRESS *and judgment;—while it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*, Iſa. liii. 8, 10. O but this infinitely ſevere act of juſtice and judgment againſt Chriſt was an infinite act of mercy towards us! And, as we had periſhed eternally, if we had not been thus judged and condemned in a Surety; ſo this *judgment* execute upon him is noble matter of a ſong. To ſing of *judgment*, in this ſenſe, is one of the ſweeteſt hymns to the praiſe of God.

(6.) *Judg-*

(6.) *Judgment* ſometimes ſignifies the *ſolemnity* of the *laſt day; Behold, the Lord comes with ten thouſands of his ſaints, to execute* JUDGMENT *upon all*, Jude, ver. 14, 15. And though it will be a day of terrible vengeance to the wicked Chriſtleſs world, yet the ſaints may ſing of *joy;* for, *the day of their redemption draws near; when Chriſt, who is their life ſhall appear, they ſhall appear with him in g'ory. Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the duſt.*

(7.) *Judgment* ſometimes ſignifies the *puniſhment of the wicked* in a *wrathful manner;* and the heavy plagues which he pours out upon any perſon or people, whether it be ſword, famine, peſtilence, or any other ſtroak; Exod. vi. 6. *I will redeem you from Egypt*) ſays God of Iſrael) *with a ſtretched-out hand, and with great* JUDGMENTS; that is, with great *plagues* and *puniſhments* upon the Egyptians. *The Lord is known by the* JUDGMENTS *which he executeth.* And ſometimes the Lord gives his church and people occaſion to ſing of *judgment* in this ſenſe, as Iſrael did at the Red-ſea, after God had poured out all his plagues upon Pharoah and upon his proud hoſt; on which occaſion you have the ſong of Moſes, Exod. xv. In this ſenſe it is ſaid, *The righteous ſhall rejoice when he ſees the vengeance;* not that he will love to feed his eyes upon the blood and ruin of his fellow-creatures, but rejoice in that God is glorified in the deſtruction of his enemies, and the ſalvation of his church and people.

(8.) *Judgment* ſometimes ſignifies the *chaſtiſement* of the *godly:* for, as there is a *wrathful judgment*, which God exerciſes towards his enemies; ſo there is a *fatherly judgment*, which he exerciſes towards his friends. In this ſenſe we may underſtand that word in the inſtitution of the ſacrament, even as it concerns the godly themſelves, *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation* [or, JUDGMENT], *to himſelf*, as the word may be rendered, 1 Cor. xi. 29. And indeed, as a believer may communicate unworthily, ſo his unworthy communicating may

may bring on him heavy *judgments* or *chaſtiſements* from the Lord; *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep*, verſe 30. *Judgment*, I ſay, ſignifies ſometimes *fatherly judgments* or *chaſtiſements*: and thus it is to be underſtood, 1 Peter iv. 17. *The time is come that* JUDGMENT *muſt begin at the houſe of God;* and in this ſenſe eſpecially I conceive *judgment* to be meant in the text, *I will ſing of mercy and of* JUDGMENT: So that by judgment here we are to underſtand all the *hardſhips* and *ſorrows* of a believer's lot, whether punitive or probative, *that is*, whether for the puniſhment of his ſins, or the probation of his graces: all penal diſpenſations for his correction, or whatever diſpenſations make for his trial: all adverſity, ſufferings, and diſtreſſes, of whatſoever kind.

Now, if you aſk more particularly what theſe judgments are? I think they may be all reduced to theſe four ordinary words, 1. The judgment of *affliction*. 2. The judgment of *temptation*. 3. The judgment of *deſertion*. 4. The judgment of *ſin* itſelf, which may be ſo called, when a man is left to fall into it for the puniſhment of other ſins. I am not yet come to ſhew how theſe, or any of theſe, may afford matter of a ſong; I am as yet telling you what are the judgments they may meet withal. And,

1. The judgment of *affliction*. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, even their outward afflictions: ſometimes they are afflicted in their bodies, with ſickneſs; ſometimes in their eſtate, with poverty; ſometimes in their name, with reproach; ſometimes in their relations, either by the graceleſneſs of their relations, or by their death; if they were gracious, then they are afflicted with grief that they have loſt them; if they were graceleſs, then they are afflicted with fear leſt they be gone to hell; if they know not whether they died in Chriſt or not, they are afflicted with perplexity, becauſe they know not what is become of them: ſometimes they are afflicted in their families, with this and the other croſs, and diſorder, and confuſion; ſometimes in their neighbours and brethren, whether wicked or godly, from whom they may have trials of many ſorts; ſome-

ſometimes in their cauſe they maintain, and for conſcience ſake, they may be perſecuted and haraſſed; *If any man will live godly in this world, he muſt ſuffer perſecution: through much tribulation we muſt enter into the kingdom of God.* There is a neceſſity for it; for the believer here is like the tribe of Manaſſeh, half on this ſide Jordan, in the land of the Amorites; and half on the other ſide, in the holy land: I mean, he hath both corruption and grace, and hence a neceſſity of affliction and ſuffering; for if he hath any good in him, the devil will ſurely gnaſh at him, and endeavour, if he can, to devour him; and if he hath evil in him, he muſt look that God will afflict him. But,

2. There is the judgment of *temptation*, that the children of God ſometimes meet with, even *the fiery darts of the devil:* for the Lord ſees fit ſometimes to let Satan looſe on his people; who will not be wanting to improve any liberty granted to him, with his uttermoſt power and policy, as we ſee in the caſe of Job. It is ſtrange to read how Chriſt was tempted of the devil, Mat. iv. 3,—10. And after that, let none think ſtrange, that the followers of Chriſt may be tempted to deny their ſonſhip; tempted to doubt of God's care; tempted to deſtroy themſelves; yea, tempted to worſhip the devil: for, *In all theſe things he was tempted like as we are, yet without ſin;* and in that he himſelf, though he ſinned not, yet ſuffered, *being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* The children of grace may be tempted to atheiſm, and to doubt of the being of a God; tempted to blaſphemy and horrible things, that they dare not tell for a world. It is ſaid by the ſpouſe, Song ii. 4. *He brought me to the banqueting-houſe, and his banner over me was love.* Why? what is the meaning of a banner in a banqueting-houſe? A banner is rather for a battle: but indeed, Sirs, here the banquet and the banner go together: for the battle many times follows the banquet. It may be, Satan and corruption are ſleeping, as it were now; but I aſſure you, they are not dead: ſo long as ye have ſin, ye ſhall have temptations to ſin; ſo long as there is a finger of the believer out

out of heaven, the devil will be ſtriking at it. If temptations have not aſſaulted you already ſince the ſacrament, as I fear they have, yet be ſure the Philiſtines will be upon you.

3. There is the judgment of *deſertion*, which is yet ſorer than any of the former; *Thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled.* Sometimes the believer comes under the ſad loſs of the light of God's countenance, and the ſenſe of his love; and may loſe his gracious comfortable preſence very ſuddenly, even when he is juſt opening the door of his heart, as it were, to let him in; *I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone*, Cant. v. 6. Sometimes he loſes that comfortable preſence very unworthily, even in a fit of drouſineſs and ſpiritual ſecurity, as in that ſame fifth of the Song, verſe 3. Sometimes he loſes it very long; *I ſought him, but I found him not; I called on him, but he gave me no anſwer.* I went from duty to duty, from ordinance to ordinance, and yet not ſo much as a word or a look from him. In this caſe, it cannot but be a very melancholy time with the believer, when he goes *mourning without the ſun*, ſaying, *O that I knew where I might find him! O that it were with me as in months paſt!* Eſpecially if he knows that he hath not loſt that preſence by ſovereignty on the Lord's part, but ſinfully on his part, and that he hath ſinned him away. How ill went it with Aſaph, when he was forced to ſay, *I remembred God, and was troubled*, Pſalm lxxvii. 3. Why? he remembred his own unkindneſs and ingratitude, that provoked the Lord to be gone. O! it is not eaſy to comfort the ſoul in this caſe. This ſoul-deſertion is ordinarily attended with the want of life and for the performance of duty; *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up*, Pſal. xl. 12. His ſpiritual ſtrength was ſo worn away, that he was neither able to pray nor praiſe; or do any duty with livelineſs or activity. In this caſe, the ſoul cannot pray with life or power; it cannot hear with joy or profit, it cannot meditate with any delight or ſpirituality; it cannot act with any freedom or liberty; it cannot ſuffer for God with any zeal, patience, boldneſs, or reſolution.

reſolution. O what a judgment is deſertion! In this caſe, the ſoul is filled ſometimes with fearful apprehenſions of the wrath of God, and everlaſting vengeance; though believers be ſecured againſt this, by the oath of God, the blood of Chriſt, and the ſeal of the Spirit; yet, under unbelief, temptation, and deſertion, they may have fearful apprehenſions of it, and that for their correction for their ſins; for, though he *pardon their iniquity*, he *will take vengeance on their inventions*. Here the believer may be afraid of terrible judgments; *my fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments*, Pſal. cxix. 120. He may ſometimes be afraid, leſt God lay open the filthineſs and wickedneſs of his heart to the world, and make him a reproach and a ſcandal to the godly and the wicked; this made the pſalmiſt pray, *O make me not the reproach of the fooliſh: let none that fear thy name be aſhamed for my ſake*. Sometimes he may be afraid leſt God ſtrike him ſuddenly with a viſible and ſignal judgment, and take him off the ſtage in a terrible manner; hence ſays David, *Take me not away in thy wrath*. Sometimes he may be afraid leſt he be the Jonas that hath raiſed, or may raiſe the ſtorm of God's wrath againſt the family, the congregation, the church, the land where he lives: the apprehenſions of this nature may be grievous and perplexing, and create a multitude of thoughts within him; yea, in this deſerted caſe, he may be filled with the *terrors of God*, and the *arrows of the Almighty drinketh up his ſpirit*, Job vi. 4. They may be brought to that paſs, that the *ſorrows of hell compaſs them about* ſo as they *chooſe ſtrangling and death rather than life*; and yet all this may be in a way of fatherly judgment, for the puniſhment of their ſins; as David's bones were broken for his murder and adultery: though ſometimes he hath done it in ſovereignty; yet the terrors of the Lord may bring them the length of diſtraction; *While I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted*, Pſal. lxxxviii. 15. O what a ſtorm is this! Deſertion may come to a great height, and bring along with it dreadful ſtorms of fear, terror, and diſtraction. It may be, your mountain is ſtanding ſtrong, believer; but look to yourſelf,

and beware of God-provoking ſins, for he may hide his face, and then be ſure ye ſhall be troubled. Many, under ſenſible enjoyments, are like a man in a meadow, the ſun ſhining upon him, and, or ever he is aware, the miſt comes about him, and he knows not where he is. There may come a miſt about your ſoul, that you will hardly know where you are, or where you have been, or whether your former experiences have been any thing, but a dream. However, this is one of the judgments that the people of God may meet with.

4. There is the judgment of *ſin*, which is worſt of all, and hath the nature of a judgment; when God lets the man fall into one ſin for the puniſhment of another, as he may do even with his own, when his fatherly anger burns hotly againſt them; this is the ſaddeſt judgment and ſevereſt chaſtiſement that, I think, a child of God can meet with: and it would ſeem that David's adultery was thus, in part, chaſtiſed, by letting him fall into murder; and Peter's pride and ſelf-confidence, by letting him fall into a threefold denial of his Lord and Maſter; and thus he may do till the time of reſtoring their ſouls, which he hath determined, ſhall come. O how ill, how dreadfully ill does it go with the children of God, when they are brought to that pitiful complaint, *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts from thy fear!* Iſaiah lxiii. 17. And when led captive by ſin, Satan, and an evil heart; by *the luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life.*——Thus I have told you ſome of theſe judgments that the people of God may meet with.

2*dly*, Now the *ſecond* queſtion upon this head, was, What it is *in* or *about* judgment, that may afford matter of ſinging, or of a ſong of praiſe? And now, ſome may be thinking, O Sir, theſe judgments you have been ſpeaking of, are juſt the things that mar all my ſinging, and it will be ſtrange, if there be any matter of ſinging, notwithſtanding of theſe; for if theſe be the judgments, what can be the ſong or ground of ſinging, when they afford ſuch ground of ſighing and lamen-

lamentation? I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you, upon what grounds the ſovereign Lord may even make theſe things matter of a ſong of praiſe. And,

1. Say you, What ground to ſing of judgment may a child of God have, when *affliction* is the judgment? Indeed, *No affliction of itſelf is joyous, but grievous;* but *the Lord can bring meat out of the eater, and ſweet out of the ſtrong;* and a ſweet ſong out of a ſad ſtroak and affliction: Hence David ſings of affliction, and ſays, *It was good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes*, Pſal. cxix. 71. Now, there is ground to ſing of judgment, when affliction is not in wrath, but in love; when it comes not from a wrathful, but a fatherly judge; when it is not ſatisfactory, but caſtigatory; when it is not to ſatisfy divine juſtice, but to correct vicious habits; when it is not expiatory, but exprobatory; when it is not to expiate ſin, but to prove grace: *That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. i. 7. That Chriſt drank out all the wrath out of the cup of affliction, and left nothing behind but love for his people to drink, O what matter of ſong is here! For, *Being juſtified by his blood, we are ſaved from wrath through him*, Rom. v. 9.—There is ground to ſing of judgment, when affliction is attended with *inſtruction*, even ſaving inſtruction: to this purpoſe the pſalmiſt ſings, *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, and teacheſt out of thy law.*—When, by affliction, a man comes to learn the ſinfulneſs of ſin, and the evil of it; the emptineſs of the creature, and the vanity of it; and the fulneſs of Chriſt, and his all-ſufficiency. O when the God of heaven does famiſh all our gods on earth, and ſtarve us as to creature-comforts, to make us hunger after the fulneſs and ſweetneſs of Chriſt, What matter of ſinging is this!—There is ground to ſing of judgment, when affliction make us *conform* to the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who, as *he ſuffered for us*, ſo *he left us an example that we ſhould follow his ſteps:* ſurely, to be herein conform to the Son of God, who

endured the contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, is ground of ſinging.—Again, there is ground to ſing of judgment, when affliction tends to the *deſtruction* of ſin; *For by this ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin.*—When it tends to gain the heart more to God, and wean the heart from the world, and all the things of the world, and luſts of the world; and is a fire to remove the droſs, and a file to remove the ruſt.—Again, there is ground to ſing of judgment, when afflictions are *badges of honour;* when they are ſigns of love; *For whom the Lord loves he chaſtens:* when they are marks of ſonſhip; for, *He ſcourges every ſon whom he receives;* and, *If you be without chaſtiſement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye baſtards, and not ſons*, Heb. xii. 8. Yea, what a badge of honour is it, when a man is helped to a patient ſubmiſſion to his heavenly Father? What an honour did God put upon Job, in that ſignal ſentence, *Ye have heard of the patience of Job?* Alexander the conqueror is not ſo renowned as Job the ſufferer.—Again, there is ground to ſing of judgment, in that affliction tends to make you *happy* and *holy; We are afflicted for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holineſs:* For though the affliction be *grievous for the time*, yet *afterwards it yields the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs to them that are exerciſed thereby.* Heb. xii. 10, 11. When the deluge of affliction makes us fly as a dove to the window of the ark, and when by faith we make uſe of the water of affliction to make us ſwim the faſter to Chriſt; then it is ground and matter of a ſong.—In a word, there is ground here to ſing of judgments, in that they make *preparation* for glory; *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* And ſo the worſt that God does with his children by affliction, is but to whip them home to heaven.——Thus you ſee what ground there is to ſing of judgment, when affliction is the judgment.

2. What ground to ſing of judgment may a child of God have, when *temptation* is the judgment? Indeed,

deed, under temptation he is ready to ſay, *All theſe things are againſt me*, and yet they may all be *working together for his good*: and therefore, if a child of God be tempted, in the manner that I ſpoke of before, there is here ground to ſing of judgment, in that temptation forces him to his knees: the more furiouſly Satan tempts, the more ſeriouſly the believer cries and prays; *A meſſenger of Satan was ſent to buffet me, but for this I beſought the Lord thrice*, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8.—There is here ground to ſing of judgment, in that temptation abates the man's *pride*, ver. 7. *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure*, this meſſenger of Satan was ſent: the temptation that humbles the ſoul, and makes it ly low in the duſt, is matter of praiſe.—There is here ground to ſing of judgment, in that temptation is ſometimes the opportunity of the *communication* of *grace*; *I beſought the Lord, and he ſaid to me, My grace is ſufficient for thee, and my ſtrength is made perfect in thy weakneſs*; hereupon the man falls a ſinging, *Moſt gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon me; for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong*, ver. 8, 9, 10.—There is ground to ſing of judgment here, in that many times temptation to ſin, keeps from *committing* a ſin: the more Satan tempts to blaſphemy, the more the believer trembles at it, and is afraid of himſelf, while he does not ſee the tempter.—There is ground to ſing of judgment, in that the temptation hath *mercy* in it; mercy to others, while we are the more fitted to comfort them when they are under temptation, 2 Cor. i. 4.; mercy to ourſelves, in that we became the objects of the Mediator's ſympathy; *For we have not an High-prieſt that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without ſin*; therefore will ſuccour them that are tempted.—There is here ground to ſing of judgment, in that as it is *no ſin* to be tempted; ſo the temptation can do no harm, where there is no yielding: I ſaid, that it is no ſin to be tempted, and I ſay it again; though to yield to the leaſt temptation is a ſin, yet it is no ſin to

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be tempted to the greateſt ſin; for Chriſt, who could not ſin, was tempted to ſin: there is no ſin in it, where there is no yielding to it: in that caſe, it is the ſin of the tempter, but not the ſin of the tempted.—But, ſay you, O the temptation conquers me, and therefore how can I ſing of judgment in this reſpect? Why, the prevailing of a temptation is a ſad thing indeed; but yet there may be ground to ſing of judgment, if the prevailing of the temptation tend to the increaſe of grace and godly ſorrow, as Peter's fall coſt him many a ſalt tear; and if the prevailing of the temptation tend to the increaſe of watchfulneſs, and make him more afraid to commit ſin, and more afraid to neglect duty, and more careful to improve Chriſt; in this caſe there is ground to ſing of judgment.—— Why, ſay you, if the prevailing of a temptation will iſſue in a ſong of praiſe, may not that make us careleſs whether we yield or not. *Anſwer*, The prevailing of a temptation is one thing, and the yielding to a temptation is another thing; the prevailing of it may iſſue in joy, as I have told you, but the yielding to it may iſſue in ſorrow; and if that ſorrow be turned into joy, it will be a wonder of grace; O! *Shall we thus ſin, that grace may abound? God forbid.* The wind of temptation is croſs to the wind of the Spirit; and if we flee before the wind of temptation, we flee away from God and heaven: and therefore, if we ſing of judgment ſweetly and ſafely, it will be by reaſon of the wiſdom of God making uſe of croſs winds to blow us to heaven, and not of our fleeing before theſe. Thus you ſee what ground there is to ſing of judgment, when, and even though temptation is the judgment.

3. What ground to ſing of judgment may a child of God have, when *deſertion* is the judgment? Deſertion and divine withdrawing is a very heavy caſe, whether it be a withdrawing in reſpect of grace, the with-holding the influences of the Spirit, the quickening, grace-exciting influences thereof; or in reſpect of comfort, the with-holding the light of his countenance, and leaving the ſoul in the dark: when light is away, there is nothing but darkneſs in the air; when the Lord

Lord is away, nothing but darkneſs, diſorder, and confuſion in the ſoul. Now, *How can I ſing one of the ſongs of Zion in ſuch a dark land?* Nay rather, *Mine eye, mine eye weeps, becauſe the Comforter that ſhould relieve my ſoul is far removed:* Inſtead of ſinging, *I muſt hang my harp upon the willows.* Is there any ground to ſing of judgment, when deſertion is the judgment, unleſs it be a heavy ſong, while I cannot but *mourn as a dove, and chatter as a cran?* Why, even in deſertion, the child of God (and indeed none but a child of heaven is capable of deſertion) he may ſing of judgment; in regard, that as the ſeed of grace may be where there is not the flower of joy; ſo, though *weeping may endure for a night, yet joy comes in the morning; and they that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy:* and the reaping time is haſtening on, for deſertion is but for a *ſhort time*, Iſaiah liv. 8. There the Lord gives this to be the ground of ſinging, even in ſuch a caſe; *For a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with everlaſting mercy will I gather thee; in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee.*——There is ground to ſing of judgment, when deſertion tends to *awaken the ſoul* out of its *drouſy diſtemper; I ſleep*, ſays the ſpouſe, Song v. 2. and preſently Chriſt withdraws; *My Beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone.* Why, then ſhe fell a *ſeeking him whom her ſoul loved.* It is true, it is one of the ſad effects of deſertion many times, that the ſoul grows careleſs, and cannot ſeek with any life: but yet, if a godly ſoul become ſenſible of the Lord's departing (for ſome time, the Lord may be away, and they do not know or conſider, as it is ſaid of Sampſon, *He wiſt not that the Lord was departed from him*; but I ſay, when a godly ſoul becomes ſenſible of it) and ſees him going off, or hears him ſaying, Farewel: O then, like friends at parting, he follows him, and cannot part with him.——There is ground to ſing of judgment here, when deſertion tends to *alienate the heart from the world;* when the ſoul refuſes to take comfort from any thing in time, becauſe the abſence of Chriſt darkens all, or makes all things

things bitter to you, becauſe his ſweet preſence is away, it is matter of praiſe.—There is here ground to ſing of judgment, in that deſertion makes you *prize the light of his countenance*, the more, ſaying, *O to ſee thy power and glory, as I have ſeen it in the ſanctuary!* When the night of deſertion makes you welcome the riſing of the Sun of righteouſneſs, it is a happy parting; that contributes to make a joyful meeting.——There is here ground to ſing of judgment, in that deſertion makes you *hate ſin* that cauſed the ſame, as a ſtone in the pipe hinders the current of the water: that deſertion is matter of praiſe, that makes ſin odious to you, as that which robs you of your beſt jewels, and that makes you lament his abſence, and the cauſe of it. It is indeed matter of ſighing, to want his preſence; but it is matter of ſinging, to lament his abſence. It is ground of ſorrow, to be without him at any time; but it is ground of praiſe, that you cannot live contentedly without him: I mean not a ſinful diſcontent, that frets at his abſence; but a holy diſcontent, that longs for his preſence, and laments his abſence; this I call matter of praiſe.——There is ground to ſing of judgment, in that Chriſt drank out all the wrath of God out of the cup of deſertion, when he ſuffered that heavy deſertion himſelf, that made him cry, ELI, ELI, LAMASABACHTHANI; *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*——Further, there is ground to ſing of judgment here, in that this deſertion makes the *expectation of heaven ſweet* here, and the *poſſeſſion of it pleaſant* hereafter: when the believer longs for heaven the more now, and loves it the better, then, is it not matter of praiſe? O there is no hiding, no deſertion, no cloud there, but a conſtant viſion of glory; *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*——In a word, there is ground to ſing of judgment, in that deſertion makes room for *faith* and *hope*, till *viſion* and *fruition* come. It is matter of ſorrow indeed, when there is occaſion to ſay, *Verily thou art a God that hideſt thyſelf, O God of Iſrael, the Saviour;* but it matter of praiſe, when the ſoul is brought

to

to ſay, *I will wait on the Lord, that hideth his face from the houſe of Jacob, and I will look for him*, Iſaiah viii. 17. It may be, ye get a breathing now and then in the air of ſenſible manifeſtations, but ye muſt up to faith and hope again; and through the cloud ye muſt look for him, and bleſs him when he helps you to do ſo; for, though it were a killing deſertion, or a ſlaying-like diſpenſation, yet there is reaſon to ſing, when he helps you to ſay, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*——Thus you ſee what ground there is to ſing of judgment, even when deſertion is the judgment.

4. What ground to ſing of judgment may a child of God have, when *ſin* is a part of the judgment; when either the ſins of others are the affliction, or his own ſins are the affliction? When the *ſins of others* are the affliction, can there be any ground to ſing of judgment; When I ſee the generation loaden with ſins and abominations, grievouſly departing from the Lord, ſurely it is ground of ſighing and lamentation; and it is duty to *ſigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midſt of Jeruſalem*, Ezek. ix. 4. It is true: and yet the ſong of praiſe muſt not go down among the children of God; for there is ground to ſing in this caſe, when ye can ſay, *I beheld tranſgreſſors and was grieved.* For, as it is child-like to be grieved for the injuries done to your Father; ſo it is Chriſt-like, for *he was grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts*: Yet it is matter of ſinging, as it is a mark of love to God; for one may weep for his own ſins from fear of hell, but he weeps for the ſins of others from love to God.—It is matter of ſinging, when the more ſin you ſee in others, it makes you *hate ſin the more*, and ſwim againſt the ſtream when the faſter they run to hell, it makes you run the faſter to heaven, and ſets you a praying; that when they are haſtning to the priſon, ye may haſten to a palace.—It is matter of ſinging, when the ſins of others are the *glaſs wherein ye ſee your own hearts*, and ſee the roots of all that wickedneſs to be within you; and therefore are made the more thankful, that God reſtrains you by his power from doing the ſame; and conſtrains you

by his grace to do otherwiſe. When ye are helped to ſay thankfully, what the Phariſee ſaid boaſtingly, *the Lord be thanked that I am not as other men; and that I have not ſo learned Chriſt.*—It is matter of ſinging alſo, when their ſins make you *more holy*; and when their unſavourineſs makes your graces to ſend forth a *fragrant ſmell:* and when thereby the Lord gives you an occaſion to *convince* and *convert* them; and to be the inſtruments of doing good to their ſouls.—— Well, ſay ye, but the great queſtion is, when my *own ſins* are the affliction, can there be any ground to ſing of judgment? Indeed ſinning can be no ground of ſinging; for ſin is in itſelf a damnable thing, worſe than hell: and, in God's name, I will ſay, Whatever tends to diſcourage holineſs, and encourage ſin, let it be ANATHEMA; and curſed be the preaching that tends to encouragement of ſin; yea, curſed be the thought, in the preacher or hearer, that makes the doctrine of grace an encouragement thereto. Many ſuch thoughts may enter into us all; but may vengeance from heaven come down upon them, and deſtroy them in us, that we may not blaſphame a holy ſinleſs Jeſus, to make him a miniſter of ſin. However, ſin being the worſt of all affliction and judgment, it would be an everlaſting damp to the ſong of mercy and judgment; if a ſovereign God could not, in his infinite wiſdom, bring a ſong of praiſe out of the evil of ſin. Why then, there is ground to ſing, notwithſtanding of ſin, when God makes your ſin a *burden to you*, and you to look upon yourſelves as wretched becauſe of it, ſaying, *O wretched man that I am! Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this ſin and death?* When the burden of ſin makes you *weary of this life*; ſaying with Rebecca, *I am weary of my life becauſe of the daughters of Heth.*— There is ground to ſing notwithſtanding of ſin, when God makes the *prevalency of ſin* the mean of drawing you to a *Saviour*, and to the *blood of Chriſt that cleanſes from all ſin*; when daily ſin makes daily application to the *fountain open for ſin and uncleanneſs*; when the bitterneſs of ſin makes Chriſt ſweet and precious to you, and the ſting of ſin draws out your eye to look to the bra-

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zen ſerpent; and ſo the man ſees God get more glory, and Chriſt more honour, and his righteouſneſs more renown, then he ſings and *glories in his infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon him.*—There is ground to ſing, notwithſtanding of ſin, when the ſenſe of ſin makes a man to *judge himſelf*, and condemn himſelf, that he may not be judged and condemned of the Lord; when it makes him examine himſelf more ſtrictly, ſaying, *Search me, O God, and try if there be any wicked way in me;* and obſerve himſelf more cloſely, ſo as to watch over his heart and way, ſo as to find out ſin, and expel it, through grace, and live more circumſpectly for the future.—There is ground to ſing notwithſtanding of ſin, when ſin makes a man to *abhor himſelf*, and to *repent in duſt and aſhes;* when it makes him, with David, to *water his couch with his tears*; and with Peter, to go *out and weep bitterly*, and lays him low in the duſt before the Lord: 'Therefore, 'as one ſays, Better is the ſin that makes us humble, 'than the duty that makes us proud.' The hypocrite's riſing is the mean of his fall; but the believer's fall, is the mean of his riſing. While the ſenſe of his ſin makes him holy, and ſenſe of his pride makes him humble, his hypocriſy ſincere, his hardneſs makes him ſoft, his carnality makes him ſpiritual; happy that victory of ſin over a man, that iſſues in a bloody war againſt it: yet no thanks to ſin, but to a ſovereign wiſe God, that turns the malady into a medicine.—If any ſhould hereupon take encouragement to ſin, let them conſider, if they do ſo, whether their ſpot can be the ſpot of God's children; for, *to ſin, that grace may abound*, is a preſumptuous ſin of the higheſt degree; and true grace dare not draw ſuch a bitter concluſion from ſuch ſweet promiſes; or, if a child of God ſhould do ſo, and make bold with ſin, let him conſider, if this be all his *kindneſs to his friend?* Though God do not damn you, he may ſend you to a hell in this life, and fill you with horrors, terrors, and agonies of ſoul, ſuch as I ſpake of before: let this therefore be a rail to keep you back from the burning mountain. To ſing of judgment in reſpect of

ſin, is not to ſing of our folly in committing it, but to ſing of God's wiſdom in deſtroying it: you have no cauſe to ſing of ſin, which of itſelf brings death, ruin, and damnation; but ſtill cauſe to ſing of judgment concerning ſin, or of the Lord's executing judgment upon it.——But what if *hell* be the judgment at laſt, would you have me to ſing in that caſe? I fear I go to hell when all is done; I fear I never get to heaven; and how ſhould I ſing? I *anſwer*, Have you not cauſe to ſing, that ye are out of hell, and that it is not as yet your lot? But I will tell you, if you were beginning to ſing, it would be the beginning of heaven: *Bleſſed are they that dwell in thy houſe; they will be ſtill praiſing thee.* Will you ſay, as an honeſt exerciſed Chriſtian once ſaid, when tempted to fear hell, and thereupon to give over the duties of religion, 'Why, ſays he, if I ſhall never praiſe him in 'heaven, I ſhall endeavour to praiſe him all that I can 'on earth.' This would be a ſweet token that you ſhall ſing in heaven for ever, among the redeemed.—And thus you ſee, whether we view judgment with reſpect to affliction, temptation, deſertion, or ſin, in what reſpects it is that we are to ſing of judgment; it is even to ſing of the mercy that God exerciſes in theſe judgments: and ſo *I will ſing of mercy and of judgment.* It comes all to this, as if the pſalmiſt ſhould ſay, *I will ſing of* MERCIFUL JUDGMENTS; for judgment is mercy, as it is the matter of the ſong: or, to take them ſeparately, *I will ſing of mercy* IN *mercies;* and, *I will ſing of mercy* IN *judgment:* and ſo I will ſing of my blinks and of my ſhowers; I will ſing both of my cloudy and my clear day; both of my ups and downs; both of ſmiles and frowns; I will ſing both of frowning and favourable-like diſpenſations; *I will ſing of mercy and judgment; to thee, O Lord, will I ſing* ——So much for the ſecond head.

III. The *third* general head propoſed was, What this ſinging *imports;* and *how* we are to ſing of mercy and judgment to the praiſe of God. I ſhall ſpeak a little to the *quality* and *import* of this ſong.

1*ſt*, The

1*ſt*, The *import* of this ſinging: *I will ſing to the Lord;* that is, I will praiſe the Lord; and it does not ly in the ſimple ſound of a voice, but imports the glorifying of God with our hearts and lips, in our lives, and in our death or ſuffering.

1. To ſing to the Lord, is to glorify him with our *hearts*; to give him the love and adoration of our hearts. In this ſinging, there is the inward act of the ſoul; *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul: and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name*, Pſalm ciii. 1. It imports a deep impreſſion of God upon the ſoul, and a lively ſenſe of his mercy in Chriſt, and of our unworthineſs of it: and here the ſoul, and all that is within it, is acting and moving: the judgment moves with admiration and wonder at God for his glorious grace; the memory moves with a thankful recording of his favours, *Forget not all his benefits;* the affections move with joy and delight in God, and love to him for the riches of his grace in Chriſt. O ſhall I not love the greateſt and beſt of Beings, for the greateſt and beſt of benefits! The heart is here employed: neither prayer nor praiſes, without the heart, are of any worth: many ſing with their voice, when their hearts are a hundred miles off, gading here and there: but a fixed heart is a ſinging heart; *My heart is fixed, O Lord; my heart is fixed, I will ſing and give praiſe.* We are called to *ſing with grace in our hearts*, Col. iii. 16.: we are to ſing with faith in our heart; *He that is ſtrong in the faith glorifies God:* we are to ſing with love in our hearts, with fear in our hearts, and with joy in our hearts.

2. To ſing to the Lord, is with our *lips* to glorify him: we are to give him *the calves of our lips.* When the heart is full of love, the tongue will be full of praiſe. Our tongues ſhould be as well-tuned organs, to ſound forth the high praiſes of God, pleading his cauſe, defending his truths, avouching his name, and confeſſing him before the world; *Thy loving-kindneſs is better than life, therefore my lips ſhall praiſe thee*, Pſal. lxiii. 3. When our *hearts are inditing a good matter, our tongues will be as the pen of a ready writer*, to *ſpeak*

of

of the things that concern the king; Pſalm xlv. 1. when our *hearts are glad*, then our *glory* [*i. e.* our *tongue*,] *will rejoice*, Pſalm xvi. 9. and xxx. 12. O! the little heavenly diſcourſe argues a very ſad degeneracy.

3. To ſing to the Lord, is, with our *life* to glorify him; when the love of our hearts, the calves of our lips, and the ſervice of our lives, are preſented unto God together, they make a harmonious ſong: the praiſe of the life is the life of praiſe; *Whoſo offereth praiſe, glorifieth me*, Pſalm l. 23. When we devote all the actions of our life to his diſpoſing will, then we ſing a ſong of praiſe unto God. When we live by faith on the Son of God; for no leſs is worth the name of life, but what is derived from him, and devoted to him, then we may be ſaid to glorify him in our lives. It is a practical way of ſinging the praiſe of God, that is here intended by the pſalmiſt, as appears from the reſt of the pſalm.

4. To ſing to the Lord, is, with our *death* and *ſufferings* to glorify him, as well as with our life and actions: thus we are called to *glorify the Lord in the fires*, Iſaiah xxiv. 15. Does God call you to ſuffer affliction in perſon, name, eſtate, family, or concerns; to ſuffer want of huſband, wife, brother, ſiſter, children, or other outward comforts? Why then, you ſing of mercy and judgment, by ſuffering patiently and ſubmiſſively; and God is as much glorified by your paſſive obedience, as by your active. Whenever you are afflicted any way, believer, know that then God hath ſome employment for your graces, and expects praiſe thereby; yea, if he ſhould call you to ſuffer death and martyrdom for his name, you are to ſing his praiſe, by dying in and for the faith, as well as living by faith. O man, woman! could you die for him, that died for you? That is a great matter.—"O it is a ſmall matter to die once for Chriſt, *ſaid a* "*martyr*; if it might poſſibly be, I could wiſh that "I might die a thouſand deaths for him!"—Thus you ſee the import of ſinging to the Lord.

2*dly*, As to the *qualities* of this ſong; or how we are to ſing of mercy and judgment. And,

1. We

1. We are to ſing of mercy and judgment *chearfully*. Singing is a chearful work; we are *to ſing with melody in our hearts to the Lord*, and to *make a joyful noiſe unto God*. It is an antedating of the joy of heaven; though you be in a hell of troubles and trials, yet you have reaſon to praiſe him that you are not in a hell of fire and brimſtone: though you had one hell on your back, and another in your boſom, you have reaſon to praiſe him, that you are not in the midſt of hell among devils.

2. We are to ſing of mercy and judgment *highly* and *loftily*, ſaying with the angels, *Glory to God in the higheſt*. We are to praiſe him with the higheſt eſtimation, with the higheſt adoration, with the higheſt admiration, with the higheſt delight, the higheſt raviſhment, the higheſt wonder: for, as he is highly exalted above all things and beings, and above all bleſſings and praiſes; ſo his mercies are the higheſt mercies, and his judgments the greateſt deep; and therefore as we ought to ſing loud and high, ſo we ought to ſing low. Therefore,

3. We are to ſing of mercy and judgment *humbly* and *lowly*. Pride and praiſe are inconſiſtent; and therefore we ſhould join trembling with our praiſe and ſinging; having awful impreſſions of God upon our ſouls, and knowing the infinite diſtance betwixt him and us. When the twenty-four elders ſing, they *come down from their thrones*, and *caſt down their crowns and their palms*, Revel. iv. 10. as if they would ſay, We are not worthy to ſit upon a throne, or to wear a crown in his preſence: they make their crowns and their thrones a footſtool unto him. When we ſing of mercy and judgment, we are to mind, his judgments are a great deep, and we ought to be deeply humbled before him, ſaying, *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* Rom. xi. 33.

4. We are to ſing of mercy and judgment *conſtantly* and *unweariedly*. Every new mercy and judgment ſhould be matter of a new ſong: and O, his mercies

are

are new every morning, new every moment; and therefore we ſhould ſtill be ſinging and ſaying, *I will bleſs the Lord at all times, his praiſe ſhall be continually in my mouth*, Pſalm xxxiv. 1. *Let ſuch as love thy ſalvation, ſay continually, The Lord be magnified*, Pſalm xi. 16. It is true, the ſaints will never ſing without intermiſſion, till they reach above theſe clouds: It is true alſo, when they ſee mercy, they are ready to ſing; but when they cannot ſee the ſun of mercy, through the cloud of judgment, they are ready to *ſigh* and *hang their harps upon the willows*: yet nevertheleſs, as the obligation to ſing does always take place; ſo they have always matter of praiſe, and ground to ſing of mercy and judgment.

5. We are to ſing of mercy and judgment both *conjunctly* and *ſeverally*; when you meet with a mercy, ſing of mercy; when you meet with a judgment, ſing of judgment; when you meet with mercy and judgment both, then ſing of mercy and judgment both; and improve both for matter of a ſong of praiſe, ſo as God may be glorified, both in his mercy and judgment.

6. We are to ſing of mercy and judgment *devoutly* and *obedientially*, as knowing it to be a commanded duty. It would take many an hour to tell over all the ſcriptures, whereby we are called to praiſe the Lord: it is a good, pleaſant, and comely duty; *Praiſe ye the Lord; for it is good to ſing praiſes unto our God; for it is pleaſant, and praiſe is comely*, Pſalm cxlvii. 1. —There you ſee three epithets given to this duty, to move us thereto.

(1.) It is a *ſoul-inriching* duty; it is a good way to make a ſad caſe grow better: the ſpouſe, under deſertion, fell a ſinging and ſaying, *My Beloved it white and ruddy, the chief among ten thouſands*; and never was ſhe in a better caſe than when in this praiſing tune. It is good to cry down our complaints with praiſes; it is good, in that it is all the tribute that the King of heaven can have from us; and to deny him this, is the height of treaſon, for it is rent due to him; *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.* It is good by

by way of eminency; for it is a greater mark of love than other duties: ſelf-love may influence a man to prayer; but love to God makes him praiſe. If you can draw out a long libel of complaints before God, and yet have never a word of praiſe for the mercies you enjoy, it is to be feared that ſelf-love hath the penning of your prayers. It is a token of enmity with your neighbour, when you receive many favours from him, and never ſo much as give him thanks; ſo it is a token of enmity againſt God, when notwithſtanding of his mercies, yet you do not ſing his praiſe. It is every way good.

(2.) It is a *pleaſant* duty: no muſic does God delight ſo much in, as ſinging his praiſes. It is the pleaſant work of heaven, where new ſcenes of glory will open, and open, and open to all eternity, and new ſongs of praiſe will ſtill be ſung for ever and ever. It may be you think, when once you come to heaven, you will praiſe your fill; but now, when ſo many dead weights are upon you, you cannot, and ſhould not ſing and praiſe: well, no thanks to you to praiſe him when you are once in heaven; but, if you glorify him now in the fires, and praiſe him now, in ſpite of devils and oppoſition in your way, you do more honour to him than to praiſe him in heaven, where there is no trouble, no temptation, no ſin or ſorrow to interrupt your ſong. To ſing like Paul and Silas in the ſtocks, is more than to ſing in heaven; though not more pleaſant, yet in ſome reſpect it is more honourable, noble, and glorious. And ſo,

(3.) It is a *comely* duty; the garment of praiſe is a very graceful ornament. An ungrateful and unthankful man is an ugly ill-favoured man; nothing more uncomely in the eyes of God and man. We are to praiſe him then devoutly, under a ſenſe of duty.

7. In the *laſt* place, we are to ſing *reſolutely*, or with holy purpoſe and reſolution; ſaying, with the pſalmiſt here, *Unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing.* And, becauſe this is a part of the text, I ſhall ſhew what is *imported* in the Pſalmiſt's *reſolution* and the *manner* of expreſſing it;

I will ſing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing.

(1.) I think it imports a *grounded* reſolution, that he had got a diſcovery of the glory of God's mercy and juſtice in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; and a diſcovery of the glory of God in all his merciful and afflictive diſpenſations. He had a ſenſe and impreſſion of the goodneſs of God, in all the favours that he met with; and he had a ſenſe and impreſſion of the wiſdom of God, in ordering all afflictive providences to his ſoul's advantage. *I will ſing of mercy and judgment.*

(2.) It imports a *grateful* reſolution, that the ſpirit of gratitude filled his ſoul: ſo much does his reſolution to ſing import; for it ſays, that his ſpirit was ſweetened with a ſenſe he had of the kindneſs of God; his *meditation of him was ſweet*, and that makes him reſolve upon ſuch a ſweet exerciſe: he ſaw what ſtrong and manifold obligations he was under to praiſe and magnify the name of the Lord.

(3.) I think, the manner of expreſſion imports a *cordial* reſolution; heart and will are engaged in it: there is twice *I will* in the text; *I* WILL *ſing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord I* WILL *ſing.* He had a good will to the work: where the underſtanding is enlightened in the knowledge of God, in his mercy and judgment, there the will is ſubdued and made willing; willing to praiſe, willing to glorify God by the obedience of faith and love through grace.

(4.) The manner of expreſſion imports a *fervent* reſolution; ſo much I think lies in that word, *O* LORD, *I will* do it; *to thee, O* LORD, *I will ſing.* To be fervent in prayer, is a notable exerciſe; but to be fervent in praiſe, is yet more notable: fervency in ſeeking is good; but fervency in ſinging is yet better; *To thee, O Lord, will I ſing.* Perhaps this *O* imports alſo a wonder; *O*, I will ſing; for thy mercies and judgments are ſo wonderfully great! *O*, I will ſing with wonder and admiration!

(5.) The manner of expreſſion imports a *humble* reſolution: I cannot ſing of merit; but I will ſing of mercy, and through mercy I will ſing of mercy. To

ſing

ſing of mercy muſt be a humble ſong; for mercy towards a miſerable ſinner is a melting word; and to ſing of judgment muſt be a humble ſong; for judgment in every ſenſe is an awful word; and the pſalmiſt breathes out his reſolution in a moſt humble manner, *O Lord, I will ſing of mercy and judgment.*

(6.) The manner of expreſſion imports a *ſolemn* reſolution made in the preſence of the great JEHOVAH; *To thee, O* LORD, *will I ſing.* It is not only reſolved in his own mind, that he will ſing to the Lord, but by way of ſolemn addreſs to the God of heaven, the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; *To thee, O Lord, will I ſing:* to thee will I give the glory of thy *mercy* and *judgment:* behold, I reſolve upon it before thee, O Lord.

(7.) The manner of the expreſſion imports a *ſkilful* harper, a dexterous muſician, even in ſpiritual ſenſe; he knew what ſhould be the *ſubject* of the ſong, and therefore ſays, *I will ſing of mercy and judgment;* and he knew what ſhould be the *object* of the ſong, or to whom it ſhould be ſung, and therefore ſays, *To* THEE, *O Lord, I will ſing:* he knew who ſhould be the *Singer;* and therefore ſays, *I* will do it: he knew what ſhould be the *manner;* and therefore ſays, *I will* SING *of mercy and judgment; to thee, O Lord, will I* SING. It is before the Lord he reſolves to ſing, as he did before the ark, which was a type of Chriſt: and ſo it is a ſong to the praiſe of God in Chriſt.

(8.) The manner of the expreſſion imports a *firm, fixed,* and *conſtant* reſolution; ſo the redoubling of it ſeems to import; *I will ſing, I will ſing.* He had a mind this exerciſe of ſinging ſhould not go down, but be his continual trade; *I will ſing, I will ſing;* I will ſing on earth, and I will ſing in heaven; I will ſing in time, and I will ſing through eternity. And indeed, all on whom the Spirit of praiſe and gratitude is poured out, they reſolve never to give over ſinging. And becauſe they know it will not laſt always in time, nor their harp be ſtill in tune; therefore they reſolve, as it were, to make it their great errand to heaven, to ſing, to ſing there for ever; *I will ſing, I will ſing.* David

had *heard once, yea twice*, that *mercy* as well as *power belongs to the Lord*; and therefore, not only *once*, but *twice* in a breath, he reſolves to *ſing unto the Lord*. The word hath a great deal of elegancy and emphaſis in it; *I will ſing of mercy, I will ſing of judgment: O, I will ſing; O Lord, I will ſing; and I will ſing unto thee.*

In a word, it imports, that a God in Chriſt was the ALL of the ſong; even the *Alpha* and *Omega* of it, the beginning and the end of it; it was *of him*, as the *Alpha*; for the diſcovery of the mercy of God in Chriſt brought him to it; *I will ſing of mercy and judgment*: and it was *to him*, as the *Omega*; for the ſong is dedicated to the Lord; *To thee, O Lord, will I ſing.*— Theſe things, I think, are imported in the manner of the expreſſion, and they may help to regulate our reſolutions in *ſinging*.

IV. The *fourth* head propoſed was, *Why* it is ſo ordered of the Lord, that his people ſhould have ground to ſing of *mercy* and *judgment* both? why is there both mercy and judgment in their lot, to be the matter of their ſong, while in this world?

1. The *firſt* reaſon is, To put a *difference* betwixt *heaven* and *earth*; for in heaven there will be no judgment, no affliction, no deſertion, no ſin, no ſong of judgment preſent, but of judgment paſt: The ſong of heaven will be of mercy preſent, and judgment paſt, among the triumphant company; but the ſong of the militant church, is of mercy and judgment, both preſent. Now, *we ſee through a glaſs darkly*, and therefore ſing confuſedly; but then ſhall we *ſee face to face*, and therefore ſhall ſing diſtinctly: now *we know in part*, and ſing in part; but then the perfect knowledge will make a perfect ſong: now we are very unlike to Chriſt, becauſe we ſee but little of him, and ſo the ſong is but heavy, dull, and flat; but then *ſhall we be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, and ſo the ſong will be chearful and raviſhing: now when a mercy raiſes the ſong, a judgment bears it down, ſome cloud or other interrupts the ſinging; but then there ſhall be

be no preſent judgment, no cloud, no night, no complaint to mar the ſong, for there the mercy is not mixt with any judgment, nor the joy mixt with any ſorrow.

2. The *ſecond* reaſon is, That they may put *honour upon the divine wiſdom*, that does ſo wonderfully reconcile theſe oppoſites, ſuch as mercy and judgment are. O the infinite wiſdom of God, that can make antipods meet in a ſong of praiſe, and contraries in a hymn of glory to him. O the wiſdom that makes *mercy and judgment meet together, and kiſs one another!* O the wiſdom that brings the greateſt good out of the greateſt evil, and the beſt bleſſings out of the worſt of evils; as out of the firſt Adam's ſin and fall, brings the ſecond Adam's glory and honour, and the greateſt happineſs of his ſeed! O the wiſdom that brings life out of death, light out of darkneſs, liberty out of bondage, love out of enmity, happineſs out of miſery, holineſs out of ſin, joy out of ſorrow, mercy out of judgment! O, can we look down to this great depth, without crying with the apoſtle, Ὦ βάθος πλούτου καὶ σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως Θεοῦ! &c. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out?* Rom. xi. 33.

3. The *third* reaſon is, That they may be *trained up gradually for ſinging halelujahs in heaven.* They are not yet fit and qualified for ſinging of mercy without judgment; and though judgment is turned into mercy to the people of God, and ſo is matter of a ſong: yet the preſent ſenſe and feeling that they have of judgment, makes the manner of their ſinging ſuitable to their imperfect condition, wherein they are not capable to ſing of mercy without a mixture of judgment. They are but learning to ſing; and by judgment they are diſciplined to ſing gradually better and better; when mercy does not prevail to make them ſing aright, he ſends a judgment to make them ſing better. They are learning the language of heaven before they go there; but at their firſt learning they are but ſcholars, and need the correction of judgment. If they

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abuſe mercy, and do not ſing aright of it, there comes a heavy judgment to make them take heed how they ſing, and then they learn to ſing the ſeventy-firſt verſe of the hundred and nineteenth Pſalm, ſaying,

It hath been very good for me,
That I afflicted was,
That I might well inſtructed be,
And learn thy holy laws:

And then they learn to ſing the ſeventy-fifth verſe;

That very right thy judgments are,
I know and do confeſs;
And that thou haſt afflicted me,
In truth and faithfulneſs.

4. The *fourth* reaſon is, That the *burden of the ſong may be proportioned to their back.* They cannot bear to have all mercy, and no judgment; for then they would ſwell in pride, and be exalted above meaſure: they cannot bear to have all judgment, and no mercy; for then would they ſink into deſpair, and be preſſed above meaſure. On the one hand, to ſing of nothing but mercy, would be a burden too great and heavy; they find, when their hearts at ſometimes are liſted up to a high note, they cannot get praiſed; they are ready to invite angels, ſaints, ſun, moon, and ſtars, to help them to praiſe, for it is too great work for them alone; they cannot get their notes raiſed high enough: but when the praiſing frame is over, if nothing but a ſenſe of mercy remain, then having a body of ſin that abuſes all mercies, ſome proud thought and ſelf-exalting imagination, riſes in their breaſts, and would riſe above meaſure, if it were not keeped down with judgment.——On the other hand, to ſing of nothing but judgment, would be a damp inſtead of a ſong, a melancholy ſighing inſtead of ſinging: and therefore they are well mixed together in infinite wiſdom.

5. The *fifth* reaſon is, That their ſong may be the more *melodious.* As in natural, or artificial muſic, there

there is no melody where there is but one note; there muſt be different ſounds to make the muſic melodious. I think the apoſtle ſpeaks after this manner, 1 Cor. xiv. 7. *Even things without life giving ſound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a diſtinction in the ſound, how ſhall it be known what is piped or harped!* So it is here in the ſpiritual muſic, whether you look to the conſummate ſong of the redeemed above, or the initial ſong of the redeemed below, the ſong of mercy preſent, and judgment paſt, makes the ſweeteſt melody in heaven; and the ſong of mercy and judgment, both preſent, makes the ſweeteſt melody that can be attained on earth. Mercy and judgment like baſs and treble, make holy melody in the ſpiritual ſong: here are the different notes of muſic; mercy makes a high and lofty note, and judgment makes a humble and low note, and both make the ſong melodious. When a man not only ſees mercy, but mercy and judgment, mercy before judgment, and mercy after judgment, and mercy in judgment, and mercy with judgment, and mercy out of judgment, and mercy backing judgment, and mercy bleſſing judgment, and mercy ordering and diſpoſing judgment, mercy qualifying judgment, and mercy moderating judgment, and mercy ſweetening judgment, and mercy rejoicing over judgment, and mercy running through judgment, and mercy at the root of judgment, and mercy at the top of judgment, mercy on this ſide of judgment, and mercy on that ſide of judgment, mercy round about judgment, and mercy turning judgment into mercy; O then, how does he ſing with melody in his heart to the Lord!——It is to make the ſong melodious.

6. The *ſixth* reaſon is, That they may *prize both their mercies and their judgments;* both their croſſes and their comforts, both their rods and reliefs, as both affording matter of a ſong; and that they may neither on the one hand ſpot at his mercy, nor on the other hand ſpurn at his judgments; and that they may neither abuſe enlargements, nor deſpiſe chaſtiſements, but that they may give both their proper place and room in their hearts and eſteem; that they may ſing

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of both, and love the Lord their God in both, and ſo may love a frowning as well as a ſmiling God, an abſent as well as a preſent God, a hiding as well as a ſhining God, a correcting as well as a comforting God: and that both out of their clear and cloudy days they may pen a ſong to the praiſe of his name.——In a word, the Lord orders it ſo, that their ſong ſhould be both of mercy and judgment, and puts both in their lot; that, in the *view of mercy*, they may not *deſpair*; and, in the *view of judgment*, they may not *preſume*: that they may ſing hopefully, becauſe of mercy; and humbly, becauſe of judgment: and that their ſong may be full, and take in all his diſpenſations, like the ſong of Moſes and the Lamb; *Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; juſt and true are thy ways, thou King of ſaints*, Rev. xv. 3. ——So much for this head.

V. The *fifth* head was the *application*, in the following *inferences*. Hence ſee,

1. That there is an over-ruling and wiſe providence, making *all things*, whether comforts or croſſes, ſweet things or ſad things, *contribute* and *co-operate* for the *good* and *advantage* of the hidden remnant; *We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpoſe*, Rom. viii. 28. Mercy and judgment, and all adverſe and proſperous things, work together to be the matter of a ſong: ſurely there is a *wheel within a wheel*; there is a ſecret hand that draws up and tunes all the ſtrings of the harp of providence, to make a ſweet ſong of praiſe unto God; there is an infinitely wiſe hand, like that of a cunning player upon his harp, that makes all the moſt ſeemingly jarring notes to contribute to melody, even as he made the malice of the Jews, the treaſon of Judas, and the rage of devils, to work for the ſalvation of an elect world.

2. See the *ſweetneſs of true religion*, and that *wiſdom's ways are pleaſantneſs*: a religious life is a ſinging life, whether providence ſmile or frown. If a believer ſigh and mourn at any time, and be not ſinging at the ſame

ſame time, it is when religion is at a low ebb with him. You may think religion is a melancholy life, man, becauſe *many are the afflictions of the righteous*, and *judgment may begin at the houſe of God;* but you do not conſider, that true religion makes a man to ſing of judgment, as well as of mercy. Out of all the ups and downs, the viciſſitudes and changes, ſmiles and frowns, of the believer's lot, the Lord brings a ſong of praiſe. *Truly, God is good to Iſrael*, whether Iſrael think it or not; for even judgment will be matter of a ſong. It is the language of unbelief, when they ſay of judgment, as Jacob did of his afflictions, *All theſe things are againſt me;* but when once the gallant grace of faith takes the field again, it will ſay, All theſe are for me, and I will ſing of all.

3. See hence the *difference* betwixt *carnal* and *ſpiritual mirth*, carnal and ſpiritual ſinging; betwixt the joy of the world and the joy of the ſaints. The world may rejoice, if they have, and while they have ſome outward mercy; but to ſing of judgment, when theſe mercies are withdrawn, is what they know nothing of; nay, take away the world, and then they will ſay with Micah, *They have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* But ſpiritual joy can ſing in the midſt of ſorrow, and ſay, *Though the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of of my ſalvation*, Hab. iii. 17. 18. O Sirs, down, down, down with all carnal mirth and wordly joy, in compariſon of this: down with ſinging, piping, and dancing; theſe things are but folly and madneſs.

4. Hence ſee, that the *godly need not take any ſinful ſhift, to ſhun ſuffering*, or any ſinful courſe to ſhun the croſs; for, come the croſs when it will, they may even ſing with the croſs on their back, as Paul and Silas in the ſtocks, Acts xvi. 24, 25. Is the godly tempted to make any ſinful compliance with the courſes of the time? What need he be annoyed, as if his life of outward comforts in a world would be at an end, as if

bonds and impriſonments, the loſs of worldly goods and enjoyments were abiding him, if he makes not this and the other compliance? What need any annoyment? For his ſuffering time may be his ſinging time; *I will ſing of mercy and of judgment.* Beſides, all his *light afflictions here, which laſt but for a moment, work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

5. Hence ſee, what a *ſweet place heaven muſt be*, and *what ſinging muſt be there:* If a ſong of mercy mixt with judgment here is ſweet, and ſometimes even raviſhing, O what a ſweet ſong is that of the redeemed about the throne, where there is no more judgment, no more ſorrow or ſin! And little wonder that the believer long for heaven, ſeeing his ſweeteſt ſongs are mixt with ſighs, and his mercies with judgments; his ſweeteſt ſongs here have ſtill this heavy ſigh in them, *Ah*, and *wo is me*, that wherever I go in this world, I am always drawing a body of death along with me.—O what a happy time is the day of death to a believer, when he ſhall take an everlaſting farewel of all his luſts and idols! O believer, what would you think to be ſaying, Farewel darkneſs, and welcome everlaſting light; farewel enmity, and welcome everlaſting love; farewel ſorrow, and welcome everlaſting joy; farewel all my ſins, and heart-plagues, and ſtrong corruptions, and welcome eternal happineſs, and uninterrupted felicity? O would you not ſay, Farewel, farewel, with a thouſand good-wills to all theſe evil things, and triumphantly ſay, Glory to God that we ſhall never meet again? Hence ſee then, I ſay, what a ſweet place heaven muſt be: if even judgments, ſufferings, and temptations to ſin here be made matter of joy and ſinging ſometimes to the believer, what ſhall glory be? If the worſt things on earth may contribute to a ſong, what will the beſt things in heaven do? If the croſs be ſometimes ſo ſweet, what will the crown be? If the waters of Marah be made ſo ſweet, what will the wine of paradiſe be? If God's rod hath honey at the end of it, what will his golden ſceptre have? O! how happy are they who have got the ſtart of us, and are exalted above

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theſe viſible heavens already, and paſt all their fears and doubts, and are ſinging praiſes without wearying!

6. Hence ſee, what a *black and white garment the believer wears.* The garment of praiſe is a garment of diverſe colours; dyed white and black with mercy and judgment; *I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, as the tents of Kedar, and* yet *as the curtains of Solomon*, Cant. i. 5. Not only black in themſelves, and comely in Chriſt; black as ſinners, and comely as ſaints; black with ſin, and comely with grace: but ſometimes black with perſecution, and comely with conſolation; black with affliction, diſtreſs, and judgment, but comely with the mixture of mercy in their cup of adverſity, while they get *the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs.* Hence, with what heavineſs have you gone to prayer! ſometime under the ſenſe of inward trouble from your luſts, or ſome outward trouble from the world; ſome particular affair about your huſband, your wife, your children, your family, that hath been diſtreſſing to you: You have in heavineſs gone away to God in prayer, and come away with your ſoul leaping as a hart within you. O believer, you need not ſhudder or be grieved at the cup of affliction, which your Father gives you to drink; for, though it be bitter at the top, yet the ſugar is at the bottom of the cup: *What I do, thou knoweſt not now, but thou ſhalt know hereafter.*

7. Hence we may ſee, the *happineſs of the ſaints*, and of *all believers in Chriſt:* They may *in every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Chriſt concerning them;* be it proſperity or adverſity, mercy or judgment, in life or in death; he may ſing, that nothing in a world can make him miſerable, no loſſes, croſſes, bonds, perſecutions, famine, or peſtilence. If he may ſing of judgment, ſurely the judgment are not vindictive judgments, but fatherly chaſtiſements; for God deals not with him according to the tenor of the law, as a covenant of works; nay, he is not under the law, nor liable to the penal ſanction of it: they

are judgments of a fatherly judge, not of a wrathful judge, otherwiſe he could not ſing of judgment. How little cauſe hath the believer to be diſcontent at outward trials? What! are you diſcontent at that, out of which God is bringing a ſong of praiſe in time, and a weight of glory through eternity?

8. Hence ſee the *miſery of the wicked*. Whatever matter of ſinging the children of God have, yet ye have matter of ſighing, howling, and lamentation; for ye are under the curſe of God, under the curſe of his law, and ſo continue in a dreadful, damnable ſtate; while ye are out of Chriſt, all the mercies that ye meet with are curſes to you, and all the judgments you meet with are drops of divine indignation, and pieces of hell. Your temporal mercies are curſes; *The proſperity of fools deſtroys them;* and ſo your table is your ſnare: ſpiritual mercies are curſes to you; from all the flowers of heavenly bleſſings ye ſuck poiſon; the word is the *ſavour of death* to you; the goſpel is a *ſtumbling-block* to you, over which ye fall into perdition; and as the ſame wind that blows one ſhip to an haven, blows another on the rock; ſo the ſame breath of the miniſter, that blows ſome to heaven, blows you to hell: the ſacrament is a curſe to you, for *ye eat and drink your own damnation;* the Bible is a curſe to you, for the word of the Lord is againſt you, and ye are againſt it. What ſhall I ſay to you, graceleſs, Chriſtleſs, deſperate ſinner? O will you tremble and quake, leſt Chriſt himſelf, the bleſſing of all bleſſings, and mercy of all mercies, be a curſe to you, and a ſtone of ſtumbling, over which you will break your neck! for, *he is ſet up for the falling, as well as the riſing of many in Iſrael.* O that this thunder would awaken ſouls that are ſleeping ſecurely in a courſe of ſin! As all mercies are curſes to a reprobate world, ſo judgments are judgments indeed to you that live all your days without Chriſt; for judgment without mercy is the portion of your cup: every affliction is a judgment of wrathful and vindictive nature unto you. You will ſay, O for patience under ſuch a trouble and ſickneſs! Poor graceleſs ſoul, ſpeaking of patience under trouble;

you

you are thus contending with God, and ſtruggling like a fly under a mountain, and ſtriving to be quiet under that which God hath ſent to diſturb you. God does not afflict men that are out of Chriſt to exerciſe their patience, but to diſturb their falſe peace and ſecurity. O that God would awaken you! If God call for famine on the land, and make you feel the effects of this terrible drought *, it is a judgment indeed, and a pledge of hell unto you; if God lay you on a ſick-bed, and afflict you in your name, eſtate, perſon, friends, all is a piece of hell to you; judgments to you are drops of vengeance. Again,

9. See how *reprovable* they are, from this doctrine, who *never ſing of mercy and judgment.* Some never ſing at all the praiſes of God: there is a gentle or rather deiſtical faſhion among ſome in our day, in public ordinances, they do not open their mouth to ſing with the congregation. Oh! will they ever ſing in heaven, that ſcorn to ſing on earth? Many indeed ſing with their mouth, that know not what it is to ſing with their heart, nor ſing with their life to glorify God. Many never ſing of mercy, notwithſtanding of their receiving many mercies; they pray for what they want, but never praiſe for what they have: and there is much of this ingratitude among believers themſelves. Many again, inſtead of ſinging of mercy, they ſlight their own mercies, and fight againſt God with his own favours; they abuſe their peace to ſecurity, their drink to drunkenneſs, their meat to gluttony, and their mercies to preſumption. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe?* Many, if they ſing of mercy, they know not what it is to ſing of judgment; *When God's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world ſhould learn righteouſneſs.* What are ye learning out of this great drought, whereby God is

* The ſummer in which this ſermon was preached [*viz.* 1723.] was a very remarkable ſeaſon for drought, there being ſcarce one drop of rain during the ſummer months; on which account, many were afraid that the ſtaff of bread would have been cut off from them; though providence ſo interpoſed, that, by the frequent and heavy dews, there was, in the iſſue, abundance of corn for man, but little provender for the cattle.

threat-

threatening to ſend a famine on the land, and break the ſtaff of bread? To ſing of *judgment*, is to *hear the rod, and who hath appointed it*; to ſing of *judgment*, is to ſee the hand of God in the affliction, to kiſs the hand that ſmites; to glorify God in the fires; to bleſs him that *remembers mercy in the midſt of wrath*; and to anſwer the call of God by ſuch and ſuch a diſpenſation. Many, inſtead of ſinging of mercy and judgment, they ſlight both mercy and judgment; mercy does not melt them, and judgment does not move them. O take with the reproof.

10. See how *comfortable* this doctrine may be to *all believers* and *lovers of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; ye have ground to ſing, not only of mercy, but of judgment: I know no caſe you can be in, believer, but there is room for *ſinging*: the ſaint may *ſing of mercy in the midſt of judgment*. O how can I ſing, when I miſſed my errand at this occaſion? ſays one: let them give the praiſe that have got the profit; but for me, I am left under heavy judgment, under affliction, temptation, deſertion; yea, and the prevalency and power of ſin and corruption; and therefore there is no room for my ſinging, but rather for my ſighing, mourning, and lamenting before the Lord, and to be humbled to the duſt. Why, man, indeed it is not humility, but pride, that makes you refuſe to praiſe: you undervalue the *day of ſmall things*, and any little meaſure of grace and mercy you enjoy, becauſe, forſooth, you have not all you would be at; and, it may be, God is ſaying, I will ſend trouble after trouble upon you, till you be ſo humbled as to be thankful for the leaſt mercy, till you be thankful that you are out of hell, and thankful that you was not born in America, where people are worſhipping the devil. O how many millions of mercies have you to bleſs God for! And will you take offence at, or differ with your God, and deny him his due, becauſe you get not all your will? You have ground of ſinging, believer, notwithſtanding all that you have ſaid.—O! but how can I ſing, when I find ſin, by which God is diſhonoured, ra-

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ing in my heart; and corruptions, like ſo many devils, roaring and domineering? If corruption were ſlain, I think I would ſing, but no otherwiſe. Why, poor ſoul, I tell you, that you muſt even in that caſe *ſing of mercy and judgment*, and ſing becauſe he hath ſaid, *Slay them not, leſt thy people forget*, Pſalm lix. 11. If your corruptions were ſlain, as you would have them, you would, perhaps, forget your own weakneſs; forget your deliverer; forget your dependence on him; forget prayer; forget pity towards theſe that are afflicted and toſſed as you are; it may be, you would forget the fountain open; forget to make daily uſe of Chriſt; forget to ſympathize and bear with others, when they fall or are overtaken in a fault; forget to walk humbly; forget the ſweet experiences of his *pardoning* and *purging grace;* and forget to call yourſelf a *dog*, when you go before him, ſaying, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog*, I am a devil, I am a lump of hell: And therefore, though you may think it ſtrange to hear of bleſſing the Lord that corruptions are not ſlain outright, yet, ſince infinite wiſdom ſees that nothing leſs will cure your *forgetfulneſs* while here, even bleſs him, who hath ſaid, *Slay them not, leſt my people forget.* Bleſs him that he hath not only ſaid, of affliction, temptation, deſertion, *Let not my people want them, leſt they forget;* but even of ſins, corruption, and ſpiritual enemies, *Slay them not, leſt my people forget:* better they be not ſlain, than that you forget to give Chriſt the glory of his ſaving offices, by employing him daily to heal all your diſeaſes, and fight all your battles.

11. Hence ſee the *mark of a true believer*, and try yourſelves by this doctrine. Do you ſing of mercy and judgment? I might tell you for marks, that if you have learned this ſong of mercy and judgment, as the ſong hath been introduced with ſorrowing, I mean with legal conviction and humiliation; ſo you will find it *interrupted with ſighing*, becauſe all the powers of hell and corruption will oppoſe this ſweet exerciſe; you will find your harp muſt perpetually be tuned by the hand of the Spirit, and that you are incapable to ſing,

till

till he pen the ſong; for it is with the believer as with the marygold, it opens and ſhuts as the ſun riſes and ſets; and yet even when the ſun is ſet, as it were, that you cannot open and praiſe, you will find *praiſe waiting for the Lord in Zion*, Pſal. lxv. 1.; or as it may be rendered, *Praiſe is* SILENT *for thee in Zion*: Why? the Spirit of praiſe is ſometimes ſilent, but yet it is a waiting ſilence; you will be waiting for the Spirit of praiſe to be poured out, and in the mean time acknowledging your debt of praiſe; and ſo, while it is not ſenſibly running out, it is gathering a dam, as it were, till the Spirit be poured out from on high, and then it will flow amain.—But, inſtead of all other marks that might be mentioned, I offer this; If you be one that hath learned to ſing of mercy and judgment, then you have got a diſcovery of the *glory of God's mercy and judgment*, as reconciled together, and mutually embracing one another in Chriſt Jeſus. There are two letters of God's name, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. the one is *mercy* and *grace*; *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious*; the other is *juſtice* and *judgment*; *The Lord that will by no means clear the guilty*: and theſe are the two ſtrings of the harp, on which the believer ſings. Now, have you been taught of God, to reconcile theſe two letters of God's name, and ſo to play upon theſe two ſtrings, by admiring the infinite wiſdom, that hath made them *meet together*, and *kiſs one another* in Chriſt? Pſal. lxxxv. 10. Have you ſeen ſalvation ſpringing out of both theſe, and glory ariſing to both theſe attributes of God, from Chriſt's obedience to the death, *whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation!* Have you ſeen mercy running in the channel of a complete ſatisfaction to juſtice, and ſo God by no means clearing the guilty, without a ſacrifice and atonement? Many pretend to ſing of mercy, and ſay, I hope in God's mercy; but they know not what it is to ſing of mercy, to the higheſt praiſe of mercy, in finding out a ranſom, whereby mercy is magnified, not to the diſparagement, but to the higheſt praiſe of infinite juſtice; becauſe judgment was execute upon the Surety to the uttermoſt, that the curſe of the law

law, and the vengeance of heaven againſt ſin, could demand. If ever you ſang to purpoſe of mercy and judgment, you have ſeen and admired the glory that ſhines in this mutual embracing betwixt mercy and judgment.

12. The laſt inference I offer, is this. Hence we may ſee the *duty of all the people of God*, namely, to *ſing of mercy and judgment:* As it is the duty of all hearing me, to ſeek and pray while they are out of heaven, ſo to ſing and praiſe while they are out of hell. But whatever others do, believer, you in particular are to ſing of mercy and judgment: he hath done much for others, but he hath done more for you; he hath given you himſelf to be your God, his Son to be your ſhield, his Spirit to be your guide, his covenant to be your charter, and his heaven to be your inheritance: he hath given you his word and oath, that though he *will viſit your iniquity with the rod, and your tranſgreſſion with ſtripes*, and execute judgment on your luſts, and take vengeance on your inventions, *yet his loving-kindneſs will he not take away, nor alter the word that hath gone out of his mouth. Once hath he ſworn by his holineſs, That he will not lie unto David;* and therefore you may ſing of mercy and judgment: and even at your loweſt, when you are crying out, *Behold, I am vile!* O I am black, I am black, I am black; yet even then he is looking upon you in Chriſt, and ſaying, *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair*, not only by imputed righteouſneſs, but even by implanted grace, which makes you look upon ſin as the greateſt evil, and groan under it as the greateſt burden: even at your loweſt, there is ſomething about the bottom of your hearts, that ſays, O! I could be content to live in a coal-pit with Chriſt, rather than in a palace without him; *A day in his courts are better than a thouſand; I had rather be a door-keeper in the houſe of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedneſs.* O to ſee his name glorified in the world, and his kingdom coming in me, and in thouſands about me! O ſing, ſing, ſing of mercy and judgment! you have both to ſing of.

QUEST. *How ſhall I ſing one of the ſongs of Zion in a ſtrange land?* I offer ſome general directions, and then I cloſe,

1. See that your ſong be ſung upon a *new harp*; I mean, with a new heart and a new ſpirit. Ye that are graceleſs will never ſing, till you get a new heart; O go to God, and cry for it: ye that are gracious will never ſing aright, unleſs the new harp get a new ſet, and the ſtrings be drawn up, and the heart tuned by the hand of the Spirit; and therefore ſeek the new influence for every ſong, and the Spirit to dictate the ſong, and to raiſe the notes. As the dial in the day-light will not ſhew the hour without the ſun, ſo your harp of graces will not afford melody without the Spirit; therefore ſeek the Spirit to help you, when you cannot utter his praiſe: and when you find your hearts in a praiſing frame, O continue at the exerciſe, ſaying, as David, *My heart is fixt, my heart is fixt, I will ſing and give praiſe.*

2. If you would ſing aright of mercy and judgment, then you may ſing in your *beſt robes*; I mean, putting on Chriſt Jeſus, and his righteouſneſs, for your garment; this is the *garment of praiſe*; and this garment *ſmells of aloes, myrrh, and caſſia*, and is the only thing that can perfume the praiſes of the ſaints. If you have Eſau's garments, what though you have Jacob's voice; ſo as you want a tongue, and a heart, and a voice, to praiſe him as you ought; yet, with your elder Brother's garment, you may get the bleſſing. Come to God, under a ſenſe of your own unworthineſs, and want of righteouſneſs, and yet ſaying, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain.* O pray and praiſe both under the covert of blood.

3. Put a *mark upon mercy.* If you would ſing of mercy, though it were never ſo little, it is more than you deſerve. I have heard of a Jewiſh doctor, that was called *Rabbi* THIS TOO, becauſe he uſed to ſay, whatever befel him, *This is good too*, and *this too*, and *this too*: you may well ſay, how little ſoever you have, This is more than I am worthy of, and this too, and this too. He that ſees that nothing is his but ſin, cannot

not but wonder that any thing is his, but hell: put a mark upon mercy, ſaying, *O my ſoul, forget not all his benefits*, Pſalm ciii. 2,—5. Mind the viſit he gave you at ſuch and ſuch a place, in ſuch and ſuch an ordinance; mind his words of grace, and emanations of love: put up ſome of the manna in the golden pot.

4. Put a *mark upon judgments.* If you would ſing of judgment, as well as mercy, and lay your account with judgment, let not national judgments paſs without a remark, that God may get the glory of his holy and juſt adminiſtrations: many judgments are come upon us, and many ſad tokens of judgment a-coming, becauſe of our national apoſtaſy from the work of reformation, our covenant-breaking, our perjury, and, O the other rampant abominations of our day. Learn the language of judgment, *Hear the rod.* See Iſaiah xxiv. 14. It is matter of ſinging, that Chriſt hath a greater concern for his church than you have; for, *the government is upon his ſhoulders:* God will take care of his own church; and Chriſt hath more care of it than you can have; and, *upon all the glory there ſhall be a defence:* but no thanks to a corrupt party, that would ſet doctrine, diſcipline, worſhip, and government, and all, before the wind. God uſually brings about church-reformation with a judgment, and then will the remnant ſing of judgment, when God ſcums the pot, and caſts the ſcum into the fire; as you have it, Ezek. xxiv 12. *She hath wearied herſelf with lies.* O but Scotland hath wearied herſelf with lies of carnal-policy, with the lies of court-flattery; and there is a great ſcum that covers and clouds all our reformation-light, a great ſcum of ſelf-juſtifying pride, that will rather ſacrifice truth, than take with a fault, and rather let truth ſuffer, than her credit; and yet her credit is cracked, ever ſince her covenant with God was broken, and burnt, and never a hand put forth to take it out of the fire, and renew it, ſince that time; but yet the covenant ſhall be on the field, when the ſcum ſhall be in the fire. But, what ſhall we ſay? there ſeems to be nothing but ſcum among us, nothing but filth

and baggage: muſt all go to the fire together? Yea, though it be ſo, yet *a remnant ſhall ſing in the fires*, when the ſcum will be conſumed therein, as you ſee, Iſaiah xxiv. 13, 14, 15. If this ſhall be done in the *iſles of the ſea*, ſurely the iſles of Britain and Ireland are not excluded.——Let not perſonal judgments and ſtroaks paſs without a remark, but let God get the glory of his frowning, as well as of his ſmiling diſpenſations; and lay your account with judgments, that you may ſing of judgment when it comes. Be not ſurprized, though affliction, temptation, and deſertion come upon you, on the back of a communion: God uſes to feaſt his people, to fit them for a trial: days of ſweet enlargement are uſually like ſun-blinks before a ſhower; as Peter and John were witneſſes of Chriſt's transfiguration on the mount, that they might next be witneſſes of his agony in the garden. Lay your account with trials from heaven, earth, and hell, that having laid your account with them before-hand, you may never forget to ſing; yea, lay your account that the Philiſtines will be upon you, Sampſon; all your luſts and corruptions will be upon you: therefore, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;* and that your iniquity get not ſuch hold upon you, that you ſhall not be able to ſing. And therefore,

5. If you would ſing aright of mercy and judgment, let your ſong be a *practical ſong*. Here I muſt tell you, that ſome take the words, for David's mercy and judgment that he was reſolved to exerciſe in his government, namely, to be merciful and juſt; the mercy of God ſhall teach me to be merciful, and his juſtice and judgment ſhall teach me to be juſt: I will praiſe thee, by exerciſing mercy and juſtice in my ſtation, as a king and a magiſtrate. His reſolution here is, that the mercy and juſtice of God ſhould be extolled in his thoughts, expreſſed in his words, and exemplified in his actions, according to that command, Hoſea xii. 6. *Keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.* If you would ſing of mercy and judgment, then keep mercy and judgment: have you ſhared of the mercy of God,

and

and will you not be merciful, as your heavenly Father is? Do you know the judgment of God, and will you not be juſt and righteous, and equal in all your dealings with men, and converſation in the world? David's ſong here is a practical ſong; and you may ſee, at your leiſure, the ſeveral notes of this practical ſong in the following part of the pſalm: and do you the ſame according to your ſtation. One note of his ſong is, verſe 2. *I will behave myſelf wiſely in a perfect way*, &c. *i. e.* that, through grace, he will act conſcientiouſly and conſiderately; and in the mean time praying that the Lord would come and dwell with him in his houſe, *O when wilt thou come to me?* Another note of his ſong is, verſe 3. where he reſolves to practiſe no evil himſelf, but ſhuts his eyes from ſeeing evil. Another note of his ſong, verſes 4, 5. he will not keep bad ſervants, nor employ theſe about him that were vicious; that he would have nothing to do with malicious people, theſe that were ſlanderers of their neighbours, nor theſe that are proud and haughty, nor theſe that were deceitful, and made no conſcience of lying and deceit. Another note of his ſong, verſe 6. That he would keep company with them that feared God; that he would keep good company, and honeſt ſervants: You do not practically ſing to the praiſe of God, if you do otherwiſe. Another note of his ſong is, ver. 8. That he will extend his zeal to the reforming of city and country: we are to ſtudy the reformation of manners, and the ſuppreſſion of vice, in our ſeveral ſtations; being filled with a zeal for the glory of God, the intereſt of Chriſt and his truths.——The goſpel-church is the city of the Lord; we are to ſeek the honour of God in the purity of his church.

6. And *laſtly*, In order to your ſinging aright this practical ſong, lay the *burden of the ſong* upon the *back of the chief muſician.* Who is the chief Singer? Even Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe obedience to the death was raiſed a ſong of praiſe and glory to God in the higheſt; and by the breathing of whoſe Spirit alone you can ſing and ſerve the Lord acceptably. He hath ſaid, *Without me ye can do nothing;* and ſurely without him you cannot

not ſing; therefore depend upon him, who only can make the tongue of the dumb to ſing. If there were more dependence on him, the tongue as well as the life of profeſſors would be more employed in ſinging his praiſes, and talking of his name, and ſpeaking of his glory. What a ſad matter is it, that a dumb devil hath poſſeſſed the generality of profeſſors as to ſpiritual converſe? O the idle worldly talk upon Sabbath days; yea, on communion days! Some will go away even from this communion, talking more of the corn and weather, or any thing elſe, than upon the word they have heard, or any ſoul-edifying diſcourſe ſuitable to the occaſion.——What ſaid Chriſt of the poſſeſſed man in the goſpel? *Thou dumb and deaf Spirit, I charge thee to come out of him.* O look to him, that he would charge the dumb devil to come out of you, that your tongues may ſing his praiſes, and ſpeak of his glory. How hardening is it to a wicked world, to ſee profeſſors as carnal and worldly as themſelves! O then employ the chief Singer to help you to ſing, and plead his promiſe for this end, *They ſhall ſing in the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord*, Pſal. cxxxviii. 5. yea, he hath promiſed to give ſongs in the night of adverſity; that is, a ſong of mercy in the midſt of judgment and affliction; *I will give her the valley of Achor for a door of hope, and ſhe ſhall ſing there*, Hoſ. ii. 15. O believer, whatever be your diſcouragement and complaint, while ſurrounded with judgments and trials, let not the world ſee you dampt and diſcouraged, leſt they ſay, You ſerve a bad maſter, that does not allow you to ſing. Whatever dead weights you have upon your ſpirit, which God and you know, ye may tell him of it, and tell ſome godly perſon that will ſympathize with you in it; but let not the world hear of your complaints and diſcouragements, let them know you ſerve a good maſter; and remember how he encourages you to this, ſaying, *How great is thy loving-kindneſs thou haſt laid up for them that truſt in thee before the ſons of men!* or, as it may be explained, who carry boldly and couragiouſly, under whatever difficulties and dangers, before the ſons of men, and ſo glorify God before the world: and therefore, though

though you may weep in ſecret places before the Lord, and get to little more than a ſigh or ſob, yet endeavour to ſing before the world at leaſt, that they may bring up a good report of religion, and that the world may know you believe what you profeſs; that yet a little while, and you ſhall *return to Zion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon your heads, and ſighing and ſorrowing ſhall for ever fly away;* and that though your body will be laid in the duſt within a little time, yet a little while, and the happy joyful morning of a glorious reſurrection is haſtning on, when the voice will be heard, *Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the duſt*, Iſa. xxvi. 19. O ſing, ſing, amidſt all your ſorrows and ſighing; ſing of mercy and judgment, in hope of ſinging there, where *ſorrow and ſighing ſhall fly away.* O go away ſinging, in ſpite of the devil and corruption; and take Chriſt the chief Singer along with you, to tune your harp, whenſoever the devil puts it out of tune; *Go up from the wilderneſs: leaning upon him, who hath engaged to work in you both to will and to do.*

And now, when we are parting, alas! is it not a ſore matter, that there are many here, that will never learn to ſing on earth, nor ever be admitted to the very firſt note of the ſpiritual ſong, which is, to *believe on the Son of God;* for, *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, or praiſe him; and, as they never get to this, ſo it never coſt them an hour's care, or made them loſe an hour's ſleep, that they could not believe in Chriſt. O wretched man! are you careleſs and indifferent, whether you ſing in heaven among angels, or roar in hell among devils, to all eternity? Yea, there are ſome here, that do not believe there is ſuch a perſon as Chriſt in heaven; they have had a fancy about him, by their hearing of him in the goſpel, but never had the faith of the Son of God, by the Spirit's revealing him in the heart: and yet you are living careleſs and ſecure, in the purſuit of your ſins and idols: you are going ſtraight to hell, with a cart-load of ſermons on your back, and making poor miniſters ſpend their breath and labour in vain, and preach you to the devil, when they would gladly preach you to Chriſt.

Chriſt. O! ſhall we part, and not a ſoul of you be touched and turned to the Lord, or brought to learn any other ſong, but to ſing yourſelves aſleep in the arms of the devil and your luſts? Some are ſleeping in the arms of a black devil, in the purſuit of groſs and abominable luſts, of drunkenneſs, whoredom, ſabbath-breaking, *&c.* Others are ſleeping in the arms of a white devil, going about to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own, reſting on their legal duties and prayers; having a *form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof;* expecting God will have mercy on them, becauſe they obſerve ſeveral duties of the law, which others neglect; and ſo ſinging a falſe ſong of mercy, or hope of mercy, while they never knew the judgment of God, nor ſaw the wonders of God's executing all the judgments threatened in the law upon the glorious Surety Chriſt Jeſus, nor ever came under that covert to eſcape the judgment of God: but, while you are ſtrangers to Chriſt, all your worſhip is but hypocriſy, your zeal but madneſs, your faith but fancy, and your work abominable to God. O! will none of you be prevailed with to cry with your heart to the Lord, ſaying, Lord, pluck me out of the arms of the devil, and as a brand out of the burning? As you would not deſpiſe the riches of his mercy, and incur the fury of his judgment, go to a corner, and cry to him, that he would teach you how to ſing of mercy and judgment. It may be the Lord will pity you for his name's ſake. O may the Lord himſelf ſhew his glory to you, and make you ſee mercy and judgment meeting and embracing each other, and with joint harmony carrying on your ſalvation work, in ſpite of all the oppoſing legions of hell; and bring you to put in practice the pſalmiſt's ſweet reſolution here, *I will ſing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing.*

SERMON

SERMON XX*.

The HARMONY of the DIVINE ATTRIBUTES displayed, in the Redemption and Salvation of Sinners by JESUS CHRIST.

PSALM lxxxv. 10.

Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other.

MY friends, at a ſolemn marriage-ſupper, there is uſually a friendly company that meets together; and when at ſuch an occaſion, all things are managed with ſobriety and decency, it is very heartſome and pleaſant to the parties concerned, to ſee the members of the meeting with mutual kindneſs to one another, harmoniouſly gracing the ſolemnity: even ſo at the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb; I mean, the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, which we have been celebrating, there is a heartſome company, not of men and women, for that would make but a poor earthly meeting; nor yet of ſaints and angels, for that would make but at beſt a mean creature-meeting; but it is a glorious heartſome company of divine attributes and perfections, in the ſweeteſt concord, meeting together, and embracing one another. This wonderful conjunction of divine excellencies is the friendly company that meets together, to put honour upon this nuptial ſolemnity: and to ſee them thus harmoniouſly embracing one another in the ſalvation of ſinners, is the ſweet-

* This ſermon was preached on the Sabbath-evening, immediately after the adminiſtration of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper at Dunfermline, September 29th, 1723. and hath already undergone ten impreſſions.

eſt ſight, that the bride, the Lamb's wife, ſhall ever ſee at the marriage-ſupper, whether it be at the lower or upper table.

There is a great meeting in this houſe, but an infinitely greater in this text; a meeting of divine excellencies, to grace the aſſembly of the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb: *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.* When God made heaven and earth out of nothing, he made them by a word, without any other ceremony; but when he made man, there was ſome particular ſolemnity, a grand council, as it were, of the glorious Trinity called; *Come let us make man after our own image.* But now, man having unmade himſelf, if God hath a mind for the praiſe of his own glorious grace to make him up again, by a new creation in Chriſt Jeſus, there muſt be a more glorious ſolemnity yet; not only a council of the adorable Trinity, but a grand meeting of all the attributes of God, to conſult their own glory that was marred, and reconcile their own intereſts, and ſeemingly contradictory claims; for the ſin of man had brought real confuſion among all the creatures of God on earth; yea, and a ſeeming war among all the attributes of God in heaven, concerning the execution of the ſentence of the law upon mankind, the tranſgreſſor thereof. Some of theſe attributes, ſuch as *Mercy*, ſaying, If the ſentence of death be execute upon them, how ſhall I be glorified? Others, ſuch as *Truth*, ſaying, If the ſentence be not executed, how ſhall I be glorified? Is it to be expected that ſuch oppoſites can meet together? Or if they meet, that they will agree together cordially? Yea, though it be beyond the expectation of men and angels, yet, behold, it is here celebrated with a ſong, *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.*

This pſalm conſiſts of a prayer of faith, and an anſwer of peace. *Firſt*, The church's prayer, from the beginning to the 8th verſe, where they are praying for the removal of many tokens of God's diſpleaſure they were under, notwithſtanding of their return out of the

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Babyloniſh captivity. *Secondly*, The anſwer of peace that is made to their prayer, from verſe 8. and downward. We have here the pſalmiſt liſtening and waiting for the anſwer; *I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak.* The anſwer itſelf in general is peace; *He will ſpeak peace to his people, and to his ſaints.* If he give not outward peace, yet he will ſuggeſt inward peace; ſpeaking that to their hearts by his Spirit, which he had ſpoken to their ears by his word, whatever other ſort of peace and proſperity they enjoyed; when at length the children of captivity, after a great deal of toil, had gained a ſettlement in their own land, yet peace with God and proſperity under the Meſſiah's kingdom, was the great thing here promiſed, and propheſied of; and that is a peace that lays the ſoul under the ſtrongeſt obligation to ſtand aback from all ſin, which is the greateſt folly, and to beware of backſliding thereto; *but let them not return again to folly:* For true peace with God brings in war with ſin. But this is further explained in the main leading part thereof, namely, ſalvation and glory, verſe 9. *Surely his ſalvation is near to them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.* Now, whatever other ſalvation be here imported, Chriſt is the great ſalvation intended; when he is near in view, then the believer cries out with old Simeon, *Now mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*: and whatever other glory and honour be here imported, Chriſt is the chief glory intended; when he goes away from a land, then ICHABOD, *the glory is departed;* but where he abides, glory dwells; for he is called, *A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Iſrael.* But now, if we would know what ſort of glory it is that appears when Chriſt is revealed; why, it is even the glorious harmony of all the divine attributes illuſtriouſly ſhining in him, who is both our ſalvation and our glory: *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.* Now, though theſe words may be applied to the happy meeting of graces in men, upon the revelation of Chriſt in the ſoul, which I may afterwards notice in the ſequel, and in which ſenſe ſome interpreters under-

ſtand it, yet I take it mainly to import, the happy meeting of perfections in God, to be glorified in the ſinner's ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt; which is a gloſs that no interpreter, I have had occaſion to conſult, does neglect or omit: and if any of them ſhould miſs it, I think they would miſs the very ground-work and foundation of all other happy meetings; *Mercy and truth have met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.*

In the words you may notice, 1. The *members* of the meeting. 2. The *manner* of the meeting. 3. The *harmony* of the meeting. 4. The *ſtrangeneſs* of it.

1. Notice, I ſay, *firſt*, The *members* of the meeting; *Mercy*, *Truth*, *Righteouſneſs*, *Peace*. I hope, I need not caution ſome in this aſſembly, that they beware of imagining theſe various perfections of God, under the names of *Mercy*, *Truth*, *Righteouſneſs*, and *Peace*, as if they were really diſtinct and different parties, making a formal conſultation, in order to their agreement; for God is one, and cannot be divided; he is one infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Being: there are not diſtinct and different things in his nature and eſſence, however his perfections be thus repreſented to our weak, finite capacities, which cannot underſtand the perfections of God, but in ſeveral parts, as it were. By *Mercy* then here we are to underſtand God himſelf, as he is a *merciful and gracious God*. By *Truth* we are to underſtand the ſame God, as he is a true and faithful God. By *Righteouſneſs* we may underſtand his juſtice, or God himſelf, as he is a juſt and righteous God; and by *Peace*, the ſame God, as he is the God of peace, and *God reconciling the world to himſelf*. So that the whole comes to this, It is the great and eternal God himſelf, conſulting with himſelf, in a manner becoming his infinite and adorable perfections, how to glorify himſelf in all his glorious attributes, in the way of ſaving ſinners, in and by Jeſus Chriſt.

2. The *manner* of the meeting: theſe excellencies and perfections of God meet together, as it were, in pairs;

pairs; *Mercy* and *Truth*, *Righteouſneſs* and *Peace*, going hand in hand in to the council-chamber, to concert the matters that concerned their higheſt glory and honour.

3. The *harmony* of the meeting; having met together, they kiſs and embrace each other. Mercy and Peace, as it were, expreſs their complacency in Truth and Righteouſneſs; and Truth and Righteouſneſs expreſs their complacency in Mercy and Peace, and delight in one another's honour: for not one attribute of the divine Majeſty can, or will be glorified to the diſhonour of any other attribute, but mutually embrace each other in their everlaſting arms, for ſupporting the honour of each other's excellency, with complicated ineffable endearments.

4. The *ſtrangeneſs* and *remarkableneſs* of this meeting: for, the agreement of theſe parties met together is the more remarkable, in regard of their jarring and oppoſite claims: for, that Mercy and Peace ſhould meet together, and agree in favour to ſave us; and that Truth and Righteouſneſs ſhould meet together, and agree in juſtice to deſtroy us, were not ſo ſtrange and remarkable. And if they had kept ſuch a ſeparate meeting, and remained at variance without meeting together, man had been for ever ſeparate from God, and ſome darling attributes had never been glorified in man's ſalvation; our ſin and rebellion having in a manner ſet the attributes of God at ſuch variance, as nothing elſe than infinite wiſdom could provide a ſufficient anſwer to all their contradictory claims and intereſts, which behoved to be done, ere the propoſal concerning the ſalvation of any ſinner could be gone into. Why, ſays Mercy, It is my intereſt that the ſinner live and not periſh, that I may be magnified, ſince I have ſaid, That *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy:* well, but, ſays Truth, It is my intereſt as a God of truth, that the ſinner die, ſince I have ſaid, That *the ſoul that ſinneth ſhall die:* yea, and ſays Righteouſneſs, I muſt join with Truth, and claim the ſinner's damnation, for the advancement of my intereſt and honour; for I have ſaid, and will not gain-

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ſay it, That *I will by no means clear the guilty:* O! but ſays Peace, I muſt join in with Mercy, and claim the ſinner's ſalvation, for advancing my intereſt, *for I create the fruit of the lips, peace; peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near.* So there appears to be a war in heaven among infinitely adorable attributes and perfections, where Mercy and Peace are ſaying, We muſt have glory in ſhewing undeſerved pity on the ſinner, and yet Truth and Righteouſneſs are ſaying, We muſt have glory in executing the deſerved vengeance. And now, O men and angels! will you tell, can theſe antipodes meet together? Can theſe jarring-like attributes of the divine Majeſty embrace each other, in the ſalvation of the ſinner, ſo as to get all their demands anſwered, and their different intereſts advanced?— What ſay you, children of men? Can you deviſe how theſe differences can be compoſed for your own ſafety? No, no; human wiſdom ſays, *It is not in me.* What ſay ye angels? you that *excel in ſtrength and wiſdom;* can you contrive the reconciliation of theſe irreconcileable demands? No, no; angelical wiſdom ſays, *It is not in me:* well, ſince creature-wiſdom fails, we may addreſs the infinite Wiſdom of the Deity, and enquire at a higher hand? Behold, *now we have taken upon us to ſpeak unto the Lord, who are but duſt and aſhes.*—— What ſayeſt thou? O infinitely wiſe JEHOVAH! can theſe oppoſite claims be reconciled to the ſatisfaction of all parties, and the ſalvation of the ſinner? yea, it is done, it is done; it is done in a crucified Chriſt, whom we have been remembering at this ſolemnity; and therefore we may ſing this marvellous ſong upon the back of it, ſaying, *Glory, glory, glory to God, that mercy and truth are met together, and righteouſneſs and peace have embraced each other.*

OBSERV. *That in the ſalvation of ſinners by Jeſus Chriſt, the glorious attributes and perfections of God do harmoniouſly conſpire and embrace one another;* or thus, *That in Chriſt crucified, for the redemption of ſinners, all the glorious attributes of the divine Majeſty do harmoniouſly conſpire, and embrace one another.*

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When God is well-pleaſed, no perfection of God is diſpleaſed; but God is well pleaſed in Chriſt, and therefore every perfection of his nature is well-pleaſed; none of them diſpleaſed or diſſatisfied, but all pleaſed and ſatisfied to the full: ſee Hoſ. ii. 19, 20. This is declared by an audible voice from heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed*, Mat. iii. 17. And why, even for the reaſon you have, Iſa. xlii. 21. *The Lord is well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake, he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.*— We ſee he hath brought in a righteouſneſs anſwering the demands of all that ſtood in the way of our ſalvation. Did divine Truth and Righteouſneſs ſay, That the threatning of the law muſt be execute, ſo ſure as God is true, as well as its precept obtemperate and obeyed? Well, can a Righteouſneſs ſatisfying both theſe demands, do the buſineſs? Yea, ſays Juſtice itſelf, in concert with Mercy, if there be one righteous man in the Sodom of this earth, that can ſatisfy my broken and violated law, in its demand of complete ſatisfaction, then I will ſpare all the elect world, for the ſake of that one righteous man; and *by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many.* Well, ſays Mercy, Here is one whoſe name is WONDERFUL, and whom they call IMMANUEL, God-man, who hath brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs, both active and paſſive, ſuiting the precept and penalty of the law: why then, might one attribute ſay to another, We are all pleaſed, and with one conſent let it be proclaimed on earth, That *The Lord is well-pleaſed, for his righteouſneſs ſake; he hath magnified the law, and made it honourable.* And now the great affair of man's ſalvation is ſo well concerted and contrived, that God may have mercy upon them, and be at peace with poor ſinners without any wrong to his Truth and Righteouſneſs. The attributes of God have met and agreed, and ſealed their agreements with a kiſs of infinite kindneſs, harmony, and ſatisfaction; *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.*

Now, that I may ſpeak to this purpoſe a little more fully, the method I propoſe is,

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I. To touch a little at this queſtion, Who are the *members* of this meeting? or, what are theſe *attributes of God*, which do thus harmoniouſly conſpire together, propoſing their various claims?

II. I would enquire *when* and *where* it is that they meet together, and embrace one another.

III. *How*, and after what *manner* it is that they meet together, and embrace one another.

IV. *Why*, or for what *reaſon* it is that they have met together, thus harmoniouſly.

V. Make ſome *application* of the ſubject.

I. I would ſpeak a little of the *members* of this meeting, or the *attributes of God* that thus harmoniouſly conſpire together. We need not aſk at whoſe inſtance this meeting is called; it is at the inſtance, and by the order of JEHOVAH, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, one God; his ſovereign will and pleaſure reſolving, in a manner like himſelf, to concert with himſelf; neither need we aſk, what is the occaſion of the meeting? Why, man had ſinned, and all mankind, by their ſin was involved under the curſe of the law, and wrath of God; and yet God had reſolved and decreed, for the glory of his grace and mercy, to ſave a world of ſinners, *elect according to the foreknowledge of God*. And while Grace, Mercy, and Peace are upon this loving plot of ſaving ſinners, it was fit that Juſtice, Truth, and Righteouſneſs ſhould be called into the ſame council, to appear for their intereſt; ſince the propoſal of ſuch a ſalvation of ſinners ſeems to encroach upon their honour, which required the vengeance due to be executed upon the ſinner. Well, the meeting being called, compare theſe glorious perfections, Mercy, Truth, Righteouſneſs, and Peace; Mercy and Peace, full of pity; Truth and Juſtice, full of fury; which made a ſeeming controverſy in heaven. We may ſuppoſe Adam arraigned in the name of all mankind, and ſtanding as a trembling pannel; yea, his very tongue chained up in ſilence, by reaſon of ſin and guilt, ſentenced to eternal death, and ready to have the ſentence execute upon him, and all his poſterity.

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We may ſuppoſe next, the ſeveral members of the meeting opening the aſſembly, by putting in their ſeveral claims: and we may notice them in the order of the text.

1. MERCY, being full of pity towards the miſerable, comes walking along in the cool of the evening, and meekly craving leave to ſpeak, notwithſtanding that Truth and Juſtice be preſent at the meeting. It is true, ſays Mercy, that man hath ſinned, and juſt that man ſhould die; but art not thou, O Lord, full of pity and compaſſion, *The Lord, the Lord God, pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin?* What though man hath ſinned, and is all over beſmeared with mire and blood, yet look upon him in love, and deſtroy not the work of thy own hand: he was made a child after thy own image, though now his garment be rent and all bloody: yet ſee, is not this thy ſon's coat? Joſeph is gone, and wilt thou loſe Benjamin alſo? Angels are gone, and ſhall men be loſt alſo? Miriads of angels are fallen, and that irrecoverably, and ſhall man periſh alſo? O ſpare him! is he not a little one? and his ſoul ſhall live. I ſee, might Mercy ſay, that Truth and Righteouſneſs, or Juſtice, which have the poor ſinner in their chains, are here preſent, ready to ſpeak in this aſſembly, for their intereſt and honour, againſt the criminal: but let it be marked in the minutes of this court, that Mercy craves to be magnified, and muſt have honour at this meeting. Well, Mercy having ſpoken her mind.

2. TRUTH comes in, naked and with open mouth, in favours of God's Faithfulneſs, and in oppoſition to man's perfidy and treachery, ſaying, I have heard what Mercy craves in favours of this criminal; but, O thou faithful and true God! the word is gone out of thy mouth, and there is no revoking it: thou haſt ſaid to Adam; *In the day thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die:* and now he hath eaten, he hath ſinned, and ſhall he not die? What? is there yea and nay with God, who *hath faithfulneſs for the girdle of his loins?* Muſt not God's word of threatning take effect; *Yea, heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but a jot of his word ſhall not fall to the*

ground. And therefore, whatever be the demand of Mercy, let it be marked in the records of this meeting, that Truth craves to be magnified; and that its honour be not infringed in the leaſt, by any claim or plea that Mercy hath brought in. Well, Truth having ſpoken, gives way to her ſiſter Juſtice; and thereupon,

3. RIGHTEOUSNESS, or JUSTICE, comes in and impleads againſt the rebel ſinner; Righteouſneſs, I ſay, bringing her ſcales in her hand, in which ſhe had tried him, and found him lighter than vanity itſelf; he is weighed in the balances, and found wanting; yea, not only wanting and deſtitute of all that perfection and obedience that the law required, but full of all that rebellion which the law diſcharged, having ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God: and ſo is righteouſly ſubjected to the ſanction of the law, and ſentence of eternal death: and therefore, ſays Righteouſneſs, O thou infinitely righteous and juſt Judge, Mercy can have no hearing in this court to the prejudice of thy honour and glory, as a juſt and righteous God, as Truth hath pronounced the ſentence of wrath and vengeance againſt ſin; ſo, if thou be a juſt God, the infinite vengeance due to ſuch an infinite evil muſt be execute to the full. This pannel is my priſoner, and looſed he ſhall not be till I get full ſatisfaction, and my ſoul ſhall be drunk with blood: for, *vengeance is mine, and I will repay it, ſaith the Lord: and I will by no means clear the guilty.* And therefore, let it be regiſtrate in this court, that Righteouſneſs craves to be magnified, and Juſtice to be glorified in a full ſatisfaction; and this is claimed and demanded in the name of the righteous and juſt Judge of the univerſe: and *ſhall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Here is the language of Juſtice. What then? O! ſhall the demand of Mercy be utterly run down by theſe powerful oppoſing pleas of Truth and Righteouſneſs? Is there no friend in this court to take Mercy's part? Yea, there is: and therefore,

4. PEACE immediately ſteps in with an olive branch in her hand, ſaying, *Fury is not in me;* and may I

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ſpeak a word in behalf of forlorn mankind! may I offer a meek anſwer to the claim of Truth and Righteouſneſs, which they have advanced in oppoſition to the demand of Mercy? For, *A ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath.* Well, Peace being allowed a hearing, propoſes a healing overture, ſaying, O thou God of peace! may not an atonement be made, a reconciliation thought of betwixt thy majeſty and thy creature? May not one be found out to ſtand in the gap, and bear off this wrath, to become ſurety for this great debtor, to acquit and liberate this poor miſerable priſoner and criminal? May not one be found out, that will make up the breach, by vindicating the honour of Truth, and ſatisfying the demands of Juſtice, and ſo making way for the claim of Mercy? And then all differences may be peaceably compoſed, ſo as we may harmoniouſly agree, and kiſs one another. O! may not then a Peace-maker be found out, in whom we may find all our demands ſatisfied at once, without prejudging one another? Why, if ſuch an one can be found, ſurely his name ſhall be called, *Wonderful Counſellor, the Prince of Peace.*

Well, the overture and propoſal of Peace being recorded among the reſt of the archives of the glorious Court; and it being ſuch a peaceable overture, no member of the meeting could diſprove it: but the great queſtion then is, how it could be effectuate; for if one man ſin againſt another, a man might determine it; but if a man ſin againſt Jehovah, who ſhall intreat for him? for when an infinite Majeſty is offended, who among finite creatures is able to ſatisfy it? or, What can countervail the King's loſs? *Wherewith then ſhall he come before the Lord, or bow himſelf before the moſt high God? will thouſands of rams do it, or ten thouſand rivers of oil, or the fruit of the body for the ſin of the ſoul?* No, no: *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldeſt not; for it is impoſſible that the blood of bulls or of goats ſhould take away ſin,* Heb. x. 5. What then, will angels become ſurety for the ſin of man? No, no: though they had a will, they have not power;

they have but oil enough in their veſſels for their own lamps. What then ſhall be done? Why, might Peace ſay, let us not ſtand in a demur, we have infinite Wiſdom here preſent with us at this meeting, let us hear her judgment concerning this peaceable propoſal, if it be poſſible that ſuch a perſon can be found, in whom we may harmoniouſly centre at laſt.

Then WISDOM ſits down upon the privy council-bench, and being full of eyes doth gravely determine this doubtful caſe with a happy iſſue. It is expedient, ſays Wiſdom, *That one die for the people, that the whole nation of mankind periſh not;* but he muſt be ſuch a righteous One, that can *juſtify many;* yea, he that will undertake this, muſt be finite, that he may die; and infinite, that he may conquer death, and ſatisfy infinite juſtice: but lo! there is none ſuch to be found among all the creatures that ever God made; neither can ſuch an one be found, unleſs the Son of God himſelf, the ſecond Perſon of the glorious Trinity, ſhall be pleaſed, by an unſpeakable myſtery, to become fleſh, *Made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, that they may receive the adoption of ſons*, Gal. iv. 4. That ſo when *he who hath no ſin*, ſhall *become ſin for man;* man, who hath no righteouſneſs, *may become the righteouſneſs of God thro' him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. And thus Mercy may be magnified, Truth juſtified, Righteouſneſs cleared, Juſtice ſatisfied, Peace concluded; and all contented.

WISDOM having determined how this propoſal of Peace might be effectuate, all parties hearkened, as it were, with pleaſure, and willingly ſubſcribed to the happy overture, and then heaven and earth conſpired together, in ſolemn thankſgiving, ſaying, *Glory to God in the higheſt, on earth peace and good-will towards men.* ——Thus the jarring attributes of God are now reconciled, and behold the members of the meeting, that ſeemed to be at the greateſt variance, are embracing one another in their arms: *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.*

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II. The *ſecond* thing was, *When* and *where* did theſe bleſſed parties meet together? When we ſpeak of a remarkable meeting, it is uſual to enquire into the time and place of the meeting. Now, the place where, and the time when as to this wonderful meeting, are two queſtions, which I put together, for they may both be anſwered at once, becauſe of their near relation.

1*ſt*, Then in general, the *meeting-place*, or the place of the meeting, is CHRIST; and the *time* of the meeting, was when Chriſt put himſelf in our room, or ſubſtitute himſelf in the place of the ſinner, to anſwer the demands of all the members of the meeting, that had any objection againſt our ſalvation, or any thing to lay to our charge: Where then, and *when did they meet together and kiſs each other?* Why, it was even in Chriſt, when he took our law-room to pay our debt, and purchaſe our liberty in ſuch a manner, as Mercy, and Peace might have their intereſts advanced, without injury to Truth and Righteouſneſs; that Mercy might vent, to the credit of Truth; and Peace might be proclaimed to the honour of Righteouſneſs; and the ſinner ſaved, to the ſatisfaction of Juſtice. They meet together and embrace each other in him, as the Surety, *The Surety of the better teſtament*, Hebrews vii. 22.

We were debtors to the mandatory and minatory part of the law, arraigned at the inſtance of divine Juſtice to pay the debt. Chriſt ſubſtitutes himſelf in our room, comes under the law to pay the whole debt: it is true, the debt was perſonal, and Juſtice had a demand upon the perſon that ſinned, by virtue of the covenant of works; but that covenant never excluded a ſurety, though it provided none. The law promiſed life upon our perſonal obedience, but in caſe we fail, it revealed no ſurety to make out an obedience in our room. There behoved, indeed, to be a ſecret reſerve in the covenant of works, whereby the perfect obedience of another was not excluded: for, if the covenant of works, had abſolutely excluded a ſurety in our room, then the covenant of grace had been excluded,

cluded, and our ſalvation had been impoſſible after our fall; but though the covenant of works did not exclude a ſurety, yet that covenant did neither provide, nor reveal a ſurety. This is done in the covenant of grace, which is Chriſt as Surety fulfilling for us the covenant of works, in all the articles of it.

Now, is Truth and Faithfulneſs at any loſs here? No: the truth of the promiſe and threatning both, of the law of works is fulfilled. On the one hand, the promiſe of eternal life, made to perfect obedience, which, though we forfeited in our own perſon, yet we recover in the perſon of Chriſt; the promiſe of life upon the ground and condition of perfect obedience, being fulfilled to us in him, who hath yielded that perfect obedience in our room. On the other hand, divine Truth and Faithfulneſs, in the threatening of the law, which was death is glorified in that it is fulfilled upon the Surety; while we, who came under the ſentence of death in the firſt Adam, undergo that death in the ſecond.

Again, is Righteouſneſs and Juſtice at any loſs by this Surety in our room? No, no: whether we look upon it as vindictive or retributive Juſtice: vindictive Juſtice is diſplayed in its utmoſt ſeverity againſt Chriſt; *Awake, O ſword, againſt my Shepherd, and the man that is my Fellow.* And ſo the ſword is drunk in his blood to infinite ſatisfaction. Retributive Juſtice is glorioufly diſplayed alſo in the ſinner's being rewarded, juſtified, ſaved, upon this ground. It is true, might Juſtice ſay, I could have demanded ſatisfaction upon the ſinner himſelf, in his own perſon, but as I can ſuſtain no injury to my honour, by ſuch a Surety as this, whom they call IMMANUEL, God-man; ſo I find my honour and intereſt, inſtead of being impaired, is advanced by this exchange of perſons: for, though I ſhould damn the ſinner to all eternity, I will never get ſuch full and complete ſatisfaction upon any finite creature, as I will get by one ſtroak of my avenging ſword upon that Perſon of infinite dignity; and ſo *it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him.*——Why then, they meet together

gether and embrace one another in him, as the *Surety;* and if Truth and Righteouſneſs be both pleaſed to the full, the parties cannot but all agree, and embrace each other.——Again, they meet together and embrace one another in him, as a *Sacrifice; A ſacrifice and offering of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour unto God,* Eph. v. 2. Why, *He offered up himſelf by the eternal Spirit.* O great! Even by his eternal Godhead; a valuable ſacrifice indeed!—They meet together in him as a *propitiation; Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God,* Rom. iii. 25. Behold him righteous in ſhewing Mercy! Here is the atonement, the propitiation: that very word which the Septuagint calls the *mercy-ſeat,* in the Old Teſtament; and it is the word that the poor publican made uſe of, when he was ſeeking Mercy, *God be merciful to me a ſinner;* ὁ Θεὸς Ἱλάσθητί μοι, *Be thou* PROPITIOUS *to me,* Luke xviii. 13.——He hath a mind of this ἱλαστήριον; this *Mercy-ſeat* and *Propitiation.* It is not *ſimple mercy* that he ſought, but Mercy *through a propitiation;* he looked to the blood of atonement, to the ſacrificed Lamb of God, ſaying, Give me Mercy for this; by that ſolemn propitiation: *Be thou propitious to me.* Here it is that Mercy and Juſtice meet together.——They meet together in him as a *ranſom: Deliver his ſoul from going down to the pit; I have found a ranſom,* Job xxxiii. 24.——In a word, they have met together, and kiſſed one another in a *crucified Chriſt;* whoſe death was the payment of our debt, the puniſhment of our ſin, the price of our redemption, and a purchaſe of our life, liberty, and eternal ſalvation.——Here is the meeting-place then of theſe glorious perfections of God: here is the perſon in whom they centre, that they may be all glorified to the higheſt. Mercy, Truth, Righteouſneſs, and Peace, all are pleaſed.——Mercy is gratified, and conſtitute him to be *the Mercy-ſeat*: Truth is ſatisfied, and centres in him as *the way, the truth, and the life:* Righteouſneſs is contented, and declares him to be *the Lord our righteouſneſs:* Peace

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is perfected, and proclaims him to be the *Prince of peace:* yea, not only are all the members of the meeting pleaſed and ſatisfied for themſelves, in the advancement of their own particular intereſts, but they are infinitely well-pleaſed in each other; and that the intereſts of their ſeemingly oppoſite parties are advanced, as well as their own particular claims. Mercy is pleaſed, that Truth hath got all its demands; and Truth is pleaſed, that Mercy hath got all her deſire; and Righteouſneſs is pleaſed, that Peace is proclaimed; and Peace is pleaſed, that Righteouſneſs is honoured. Mercy and Peace rejoice that they are magnified, to the infinite glory of Truth and Righteouſneſs; and Truth and Righteouſneſs rejoice, that they are glorified, to the infinite pleaſure of Mercy and Peace: and hence they not only *meet together*, but *kiſs one another*. Here you ſee where they meet together.——So much for an anſwer thereto more generally.

2*dly*, More particularly, as to the *meeting-time*, you may take theſe following particulars, for further clearing of it. Although this bleſſed meeting once taking place, is ſtill continued, and cannot be ſaid properly to adjourn from time to time, and from place to place; for this aſſembly never diſſolves; yet, in a ſuitableneſs to our weak capacity, and finite underſtanding, which cannot rightly conceive of a meeting that never had a time to meet, becauſe they met in eternity, and never ſhall have time to part, becauſe they meet to eternity; we cannot conceive of it, I ſay, but by taking it, as it were, into ſo many parts, or conſidering it in ſo many periods; and there are theſe eight remarkable periods, wherein Mercy and Peace meet with Truth and Righteonſneſs, and kiſs each other.

1. The firſt remarkable period is this, They met together at the *council-table* of the *covenant of redemption* from all eternity; before ever the *foundation of the world was laid*, and ere ever the *morning ſtars ſang together*, Mercy and Truth met together, Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſed each other: for the council of peace did then meet, Zech. vi. 13. And all was concerted by infinite Wiſdom, how Mercy ſhould be magnified, Truth cleared,

ed, Righteouſneſs vindicated, and Peace concluded; and all in Chriſt, who, according to the tenor of that covenant (whereof the covenant of grace is but a tranſcript) was to *give his ſoul an offering for ſin;* and then was to *ſee his ſeed, and the pleaſure of the Lord to proſper in his hand.* Then it was that this pleaſant meeting was firſt conſtitute, as you may ſee, Prov. viii. 30, 31. He being ſet up from everlaſting, ere ever the earth was, God in all his glorious perfections was delighted in him: and, in him, *His delights were with the ſons of men.* This was the grand meeting, at which the time and place of all the ſubſequent meetings were concerted, and all the other particulars, we are to mention, are by the reſult of this, and, as it were, emanations therefrom; for it is a meeting that never diſſolves, though in ſeveral periods it appears like a new meeting unto us. Therefore,

2. Another remarkable period, is their meeting together in the *garden of Eden*, after man had made himſelf naked and obnoxious to the flaming ſword of divine juſtice. Mercy comes walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the guilty pannel being examined in open court, behold Mercy and Truth meet together in the happy ſentence that was pronounced, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent*, Gen. iii. 15. Behold Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſing one another in the righteous vengeance, that was to be execute upon the devil and his works, in order to effectuate a happy peace betwixt God and man.—— This meeting was gradually cleared up under the Old Teſtament; and in the legal ſacrifices, pointing out the great propitiatory Sacrifice.

3. Another remarkable period, is their meeting together at *Bethlehem Ephratah*, upon Chriſt's incarnation, Micah v. 2, 4, 5.

4. Another remarkable period, is their meeting together at the *banks of Jordan*, when Chriſt was bapized, Mat. iii. 13, 16, 17.

5. Another remarkable period, is their meeting together in the *garden of Gethſemane*, when Chriſt being in an agony did ſweat great drops of blood under the

preſſure of avenging Juſtice; every drop of blood was an ocean of Mercy: and while he was preſt in the wine-preſs of God's wrath, Mercy was expreſſed. No mercy to Chriſt; for, *God ſpared not his own Son*, even when he cried, Mercy, mercy; God's mercy, ſaying, *Father, if it be thy will, remove this cup from me.* No, no; no mercy was ſhown to him, otherwiſe no mercy had been ſhown to us; Juſtice muſt have its due from him, that mercy might vent towards us; and ſo here Mercy and Truth meet together.

6. Another remarkable period, is their meeting on *mount Calvary*, where Chriſt was crucified. It was upon the croſs of Chriſt that Mercy and Truth met together, that Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſed each other; for there it was that he paid all the elect's debt, to the leaſt farthing that Truth and Righteouſneſs could demand; until *he cried with a loud voice, and ſaid, It is finiſhed.* Having done all that the law could enjoin, he ſuffered all that the law could threaten, ſo as it cannot crave a farthing more: *It is finiſhed:* All that was ſtipulated for with the Father, in that federal tranſaction; all that was promiſed, in that eternal compact, is finiſhed; every article agreed to in the council of peace was finiſhed. The bargain that he had ſigned with his hand, he now ſealed with his blood; and in this appearance upon the croſs, or in his obedience to the death, did all the attributes of God meet, as in a centre. And on this account was mount Calvary more glorious than mount Sinai; for, in mount Sinai, God appeared in his terrible majeſty, making the mountain to tremble, and the earth to ſhake; but here in mount Calvary, he appeared not only in his terrible majeſty, but in his tender mercy, in his terrible fury againſt ſin; and in his tender favour towards the ſinner; and now, the controverſy betwixt Juſtice and Mercy ſeems at a criſis; here was the critical juncture, wherein their different demands behoved to be decided; and it was done with ſuch a ſolemnity as made the whole univerſe, as it were, to tremble and quake: for then did *God ſhake, not the earth only, but alſo heaven;* for when Chriſt was under the mighty load of this terrible wrath, in the ſinner's room,

room, there was *a great earthquake*, and *the heavens grew black, the ſun was eclipſed;* and, that at a time, contrary to the common rules of nature, which made a heathen philoſopher, at a diſtance, cry out, "That "either the frame of nature was on the point of diſ-"ſolution, or the God of nature was ſuffering." And indeed he was ſuffering unto blood, and unto death. Behold the living and eternal God here, in our nature wounded to death, and bleeding out his life, to be a ſacrifice for ſin, that juſtice might be ſatisfied, and mercy might be magnified, and all the attributes of God glorified to the higheſt. O wonder! that GOLGOTHA the *place of a ſkull*, ſhould be ſuch a famous meeting-place for the divine perfections.——It was a place of the greateſt ſhame and ignominy; but, in him *who endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame*, it was made a place of moſt reſplendent glory; for, in the croſs of Chriſt, Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace met, and embraced each other. God's attributes did harmoniouſly join together, ſo as the one does not blacken, but illuſtrate the glory of the other, while they ſhined gloriouſly in the face of Chriſt crucified, as a beautiful and bright conſtellation; for he was *ſet forth to be a propitiation*, to declare the Righteouſneſs and Juſtice of God, together with his other glorious names.

7. Another remarkable period, is their meeting together at the *bar of God's great Juſtice-court in heaven, within the vail, whither the Fore-runner hath for us entered, even Jeſus*, Heb. vi. 20. When Chriſt was upon the croſs, *The vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom;* and a way was made for entering into the holy of holies: and as the prieſts under the law were not only to offer the ſacrifice without the camp, but after that were to enter the holieſt of all, not without blood, but with the blood of the ſacrifice, *to ſprinkle the mercy-ſeat*, Levit. xvi. 14, 15. *Even ſo, Chriſt having offered himſelf a ſacrifice, and ſuffered without the gate*, Heb. xiii. 12. *He is entered into the holy place by his own blood*, Heb. ix. 12. there to appear as our High-prieſt in the power and virtue

of his blood, to make a full atonement, and ſprinkle the mercy-ſeat. Hence believers are ſaid to *be come to Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling;* and where is this? Even in heaven, as you ſee in the context, Heb. xii. 23, 24. Now, in this work, Chriſt carried the price of his blood into the very *preſence of God for us*, Heb. ix. 24. and paid it down before him: and in this act, Juſtice hath its ſatisfaction brought home; and by this act, Mercy and Juſtice actually are met; for hereby Chriſt ſprinkled the very mercy-ſeat with blood, all over, both upon it, and before it, as the forecited, Levit. xvi. repreſents. For the mercy-ſeat of old ſtood ſo, that it could be ſeen but two ways, namely, *upon it*, and *before it*, as a table next to the wall; and ſo this points out, that whatever way we look to mercy by faith, we may ſee mercy and blood mixed; mercy and juſtice met together; and all ſorts of mercy conveyed through the blood of Chriſt; top mercies, and ſide mercies, upper mercies, of a ſpiritual nature, and lower mercies, of a temporal nature; for the mercy-ſeat is ſprinkled with blood upon it, and before it, and whatever way you look to it. The ſacrifice was finiſhed on the croſs; and all ſacrifices finiſhed therein: but the blood of the ſacrifice behoved alſo to be carried within the vail in order to the full atonement, that what was written in blood upon the croſs, might be ſealed in the preſence of God at the heavenly bar: and we act not our faith far enough for redemption, unleſs we follow Chriſt from the croſs to the bar of God's juſtice-court in heaven, to ſee all ſealed and ſecured there within the vail, where this blood is expoſed as it were, and pled at the bar; where *Mercy and Juſtice meet together, and embrace each other.*

8. Another remarkable period, is their meeting together at the *bar of conſcience*, God's lower court, on the day of actual reconciliation betwixt God and the ſinner; for then, *The blood of Chriſt, who, through the eternal Spirit, did offer himſelf without ſpot to God, doth purge the conſcience*, Heb. ix. 14. And *the blood of*

ſprinkling,

ſprinkling, wherewith the conſcience is purged from dead works to ſerve the living God, doth put forth its purgative power and virtue by a certain internal ſpeech; and what doth it ſpeak to the conſcience? *It ſpeaks better things than the blood of Abel;* that ſpeaks vengeance, but this ſpeaks mercy and peace in conjunction with truth, righteouſneſs, and juſtice: for wherever juſtice-ſatisfying blood cries for mercy and peace, *Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace meet, and embrace each other.* This blood is the cement whereby they are joined together; before this blood be applied, the conſcience of the convinced ſinner is all in a flame, like mount Sinai; thunder, and lightening, and ſmoak, and darkneſs, and fear of hell and vengeance, compaſſing the ſoul about, while it is arraigned at the inſtance of the fiery law, to pay the double debt to the mandatory and minatory part of the law; that is, perfect obedience upon the pain of eternal death and damnation. The ſinner finds himſelf loſt and undone for ever by this law; but then, whenever the blood of ſprinkling comes in, and appears at the bar of conſcience, it ſpeaks better things, it is a better ſpeaker than the law; and what ſays it? Why, the language of it is, With your leave, O law, you have nothing to crave; for Chriſt the Son of God was arraigned at the inſtance of divine Juſtice, to pay all this debt, becauſe he was this ſinner's Surety and Subſtitute; and he actually paid it, by obeying the command, and undergoing the penalty of the law; and for this I produce the ancient records of God; *In the volume of his book, it is written of Chriſt, that when ſacrifice and offering would not, he ſaid, Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will: and that the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all: That he was made a curſe for us; yea, that he was made ſin for us, even he who knew no ſin, that we might become the righteouſneſs of God in him.* And therefore, O law, though thou haſt Truth and Righteouſneſs on thy ſide, yet Truth and Righteouſneſs have met with Mercy and Peace, and they have concerted matters, and agreed harmoniouſly, and kiſſed one another, in token of their full agreement in Chriſt;

Chriſt; ſo that in Chriſt all charges are anſwered.—And thus in the believer's conſcience parties meet together.

III. The *third* thing propoſed was, *how* and after what *manner* is it, that they meet together, and kiſs each other? We are to conceive of it after the manner of God; for it is more than a meeting of ſaints; it is more than a meeting of angels; it is a divine meeting of all the glorious attributes of God; and we may notice theſe following qualities of it.

1. It is a *wonderful* and *myſterious* meeting: it is above our apprehenſion and conception. O! how wonderful a meeting is this! The very name of the Perſon, that is made the triſting-place, the meeting-place, is called WONDERFUL, Iſaiah ix. 6. Becauſe the meeting is about us, his name is called, IMMANUEL, *God with us.*——O how myſterious is this meeting! *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs; God manifeſted in the fleſh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. That is all the attributes of God meeting together, and harmoniouſly embracing one another in the eternal Son of God, who hath aſſumed our nature into his own perſonality: this is the moſt wonderful myſterious meeting that ever was in heaven or earth.

2. It is a *joyful* meeting: they meet with infinite pleaſure and ſatisfaction in one another; *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth*, Iſaiah xlii. 1. As the perfections of God are glorified in Chriſt, ſo they rejoice and are delighted in him; *For* JEHOVAH *is well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake; and therefore the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand; and he ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied.* Surely, if God hath his pleaſure, and Chriſt his ſatisfaction, no attribute of the divine Majeſty, no member of the meeting is diſpleaſed, or out of humour; no, no; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.* My Juſtice is pleaſed, my Mercy is pleaſed, and all my other attributes are pleaſed. O it is a heartſome, pleaſant, and joyful meeting! May all that hear me be well-pleaſed to ſee it:

it: no joyful meeting, but what hath a reſpect to this.

3. It is a *holy* meeting: ſome meetings among men that are called heartſome meetings, yet are very unholy and ſinful meetings; but here is an infinitely holy meeting; *holineſs to the Lord*, is the motto of it. A meeting of holy ſaints, and holy angels, is not ſuch a holy meeting as this meeting of the holy attributes of God, to advance the great deſign of infinite holineſs. All the holy meetings that ever were, or ever will be, are the reſult of this, and the effect of ſome portion of holineſs ſent from it; for all holineſs iſſues from it. Here *Mercy and Truth meet together*, in a holy manner; *Righteouſneſs and Peace ſalute each other*, in a holy way, and *greet one another with a holy kiſs*.

4. It is a *happy* meeting; all happineſs and bleſſings flow from this meeting: Chriſt the meeting-place is the centre *of all ſpiritual bleſſings*, Eph. i. 3. Many unhappy meetings have been in the world ſince ſin entered into it; and ſinful unholy meetings are always miſerable and unhappy meetings: but this holy meeting, muſt be a happy meeting; and this holy kiſs, muſt be a happy kiſs. If Mercy and Truth had not met together, we had never met with God; if Righteouſneſs and Peace had never kiſſed each other, we had never got a kiſs of the fair face of the Son of God, nor ever been taken into the divine embraces.

5. It is a *free* meeting: Mercy and Truth met together freely, without being conſtrained; Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſed each other freely, without being forced; no motive from without could ever take place to move God to call this meeting from eternity; it was according to *his own purpoſe and grace, which is given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began*, 2 Tim. i. 9. Free ſovereign grace is the original of the meeting. It is alſo ſuch a free aſſembly, where every member might freely ſpeak, and not one to interrupt another, as is uſual in meetings among men, where ſome cry one thing, and ſome another, in a confuſed manner; like that aſſembly, Acts xix. 32. where it is ſaid,

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The aſſembly was confuſed, and the greater part knew not wherefore they were met together; and ſome cried one thing, and ſome another: no, this meeting is free, in oppoſition both to all conſtraint and compulſion from without, and to all confuſion and commotion from within: where ſovereign free Grace is the maſter-conveener, there can be no compulſion; and where the God of order is the manager, there could be no confuſion; and where the God of peace was all in all, there could be no diſſention. Therefore,

6. It is a *harmonious* meeting; whatever different claims and pretenſions the members of the meeting may ſeem to have, yet they harmoniouſly concur in advancing one another's honour and glory; and hence, as they mutually meet together, ſo they affectionately embrace one another. There was no diſcord at this aſſembly, no proper variance or ſtriving for ſtate; but glorioufly conſpiring with joint hearts and hands, to glorify each other in the ſalvation of a company of ſinners, by Jeſus Chriſt. The divine eſſence is undivided; and as *there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and theſe three are one*; ſo the attributes of God, however manifold to our apprehenſion, yet there is no diviſion among them, they are all one; and their conſpiring together in Chriſt for our redemption, is called Πολυποίκιλος Σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ, THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD. The manifold perfections of God meet together in one, with one conſent and with one heart. Behold Mercy and Juſtice in one another's arms; and ſo cloſs is the embracement, that they are juſt one. Though it be a full meeting, and all parties preſent, yet there is no war, no jar, no diſſention, no diviſion, but all harmony and concord, all love and affection: it is the moſt peaceable meeting that ever was. And yet,

7. It is a *bloody* meeting: and never was, and never will there be ſuch a bloody meeting in heaven or earth: the mercy-ſeat muſt be ſprinkled with blood; Mercy cannot be vented without blood; Truth cannot be cleared, without blood; Righteouſneſs cannot be vindicated, without blood; and Peace cannot be purchaſed,

ed, without blood; *without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion;* no mercy to be vented, no peace to be proclaimed; *Chriſt hath made peace by the blood of his croſs,* Col. i. 20. *A bloody husband haſt thou been unto me,* ſaid Zipporah; but, O how much more may Chriſt ſay, a bloody meeting hath this been unto me? *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozra?* Iſa. lxiii. 1. Why, what is the matter that his garment is dyed with blood! Why? when Mercy and Truth met together, they preſſed to be ſo near one another in him, that they preſſed the blood out of his veins; and ſo it was a bloody meeting: and when Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſed each other, it behoved to be in Chriſt, and ſo the ſword of juſtice behoved to pierce him through and through; that ſo theſe ſacred lips might meet and kiſs each other in his heart; and ſo it was a bloody kiſs: they kiſſed each other with ſuch good-will, that Chriſt was, as it were, bruiſed betwixt their lips, that the blood might cement and glue them together. One would think, ſuch a bloody kiſs would be no pleaſant kiſs; nay, but *it pleaſed the Father to bruiſe him:* they met together on a ſea of blood.—— Thus it was a bloody meeting. Again,

8. It is an *efficacious* meeting: many meet and aſſemble together, and yet do nothing for their meeting; it is to no effect: but here Mercy and Truth meet together efficaciouſly, co-operatively; all is done at the meeting, that God propoſed to be done, and all is done that concerns the glory of God and ſalvation of men; their meeting together, is their working together, and that to perfection; *For God the Lord is a rock, and his work is perfect.* Their meeting together, is their building together; Pſal. lxxxix. 2, 3. *I have ſaid, Mercy ſhall be built up for ever: thy faithfulneſs ſhalt thou eſtabliſh in the very heavens.* There is Mercy and Truth both a-building, and the foundation of the building is laid in Chriſt: *I have made a covenant with my choſen; I have ſworn unto David my ſervant.*

9. It is an *unexpected* meeting; it is beyond the expectation of men and angels. If friends and intimates

ſhould meet, and ſalute one another, it would not be ſurprizing; but to ſee oppoſites, antipodes and antagoniſts meet together, and embrace each other, this were ſurpriſing and unexpected; ſo to ſee light and darkneſs, love, and enmity, life and death meeting, how unexpected were that? Thus it is here, Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace, theſe attributes of God, with reſpect to us, were oppoſites and antipodes. The language of Truth and Righteouſneſs, is death and damnation to the ſinner; the language of Mercy and Peace, is life and ſalvation to the ſinner; and when a ſinner finds himſelf purſued to death, at the inſtance of divine Juſtice, and the truth and veracity of God engaged againſt him, according to the threatening of the law, O how unexpected a recounter is it! when he finds Mercy and Peace meeting with Juſtice and Truth, and ſtopping the purſuit, according to the promiſe of the goſpel, to the credit of the oppoſite parties, ſaying, *Deliver his ſoul from going down to the pit; I have found a ranſom*, and ſo all differences are adjuſted; all oppoſites reconciled, to the infinite ſurprize, and beyond the expectation of all created beings. No wonder then, upon this meeting diſcovered, the poor ſoul cries, *Is this the manner of man, O Lord? O, who is like unto thee! Nay, there is none like unto the God of Jeſurun, that rides on the heaven for their help, and in his excellency on the ſkies.*

10. It is an *everlaſting*, *indiſſolvable* meeting: other meetings will adjourn their meetings from time to time, and from place to place; yea, other meetings muſt part, and when they part, they may never meet again; and we that are here met, muſt part, and never all meet again in time; even as ſome others that met together with us the laſt year, are away to eternity.—But O! this meeting betwixt Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace, it is a meeting where there is no parting; the meeting is from everlaſting to everlaſting; their meeting together, and kiſſing each other, is an eternal and unchangeable meeting, and an eternal and unchangeable kiſs: it is every way like God, with-

without beginning, without ending, and without ſucceſſion.——Whatever beginning, iſſue, or increaſe it hath with reſpect to its manifeſtation to us, yet in itſelf, it is ſtill the ſame in Chriſt Jeſus, who is *the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever; without any variableneſs or ſhadow of turning*, Heb. xiii. 8. The meeting never breaks up; it is a continued meeting, never to be diſſolved; and there they kiſs one another to all eternity; *for his mercy endureth for ever, and his righteouſneſs to all generations: and becauſe of truth, meekneſs, and righteouſneſs, in his majeſty he ſhall ride proſperouſly: and of the increaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end. I have ſaid, Mercy ſhall be built up for ever; and I have ſaid, Truth ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the heavens.* Why, what is the meaning of all theſe expreſſions? The language is, as if one glorious attribute of God, ſhould ſay to another, O! the ſin of man ſet us all, as it were, at variance, and the whole creation knows not how to reconcile God with himſelf, if he ſhall ſave one ſinner; but behold we, having met together in Chriſt the Righteouſneſs, the Ranſom, the Atonement, the Propitiation: having embraced one another in behalf of thoſe poor miſerable ſinners, our arms ſhall never ſeparate, that are claſped together. Mercy and Truth have met together, ſaying, You and I ſhall never part; Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other, ſaying, You and I ſhall never ſunder, nor ſuſpend the embracement, neither death nor life, nor hell, nor devils, nor ſin itſelf, ſhall ever ſeparate us. It is a bargain among us, a divine match; they have met together by an everlaſting covenant, ſealed the bargain with an everlaſting kiſs, and faſtened a knot in an everlaſting Righteouſneſs, which is the band of the union, even Chriſt; *for the covenant does ſtand faſt with him*, Pſalm lxxxix. 28. Where you will alſo ſee how this everlaſting meeting is eſtabliſhed in Chriſt, verſe 14. *Juſtice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne;* or, *the* ESTABLISHMENT *of thy throne*, as it may be rendered; *And mercy and truth ſhall go before thy face.* And verſe 21.

With him my hand ſhall be eſtabliſhed; and my faithfulneſs, and my mercy ſhall be with him. And verſe 28. *My mercy will I keep for him for ever.*——Thus it is an everlaſting meeting.

IV. The *fourth* thing propoſed, was, *Why*, or for what *reaſons* they have met together, and kiſſed each other? Why have the perfections of the glorious God conſpired ſo harmoniouſly, and met together in ſuch a ſweet ſolemnity? Surely ſuch a meeting as this muſt have noble deſigns in view; and I will tell you theſe four reaſons of the meeting, or four things that were to be concerted at this great aſſembly.

1. They met together, to concert meaſures for advancing the *glory of God* to the higheſt. This parliament of heaven met together upon ways and means, for bringing in the greateſt revenue of praiſe and glory to the crown of heaven, to Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and all the glorious attributes of this great and eternal God. Theſe glorious attributes conſpired harmoniouſly to ſet forth and glorify themſelves moſt illuſtriouſly: they met together, and kiſſed one another, that they might glorify each other. The glory of God was the firſt and laſt end of the meeting. What is the chief end of man, but to glorify God, and enjoy him for ever? and, O! what is the chief end of God! It is even to glory himſelf in all his perfections, and to enjoy himſelf for ever. And how does God glorify himſelf moſt brightly? It is even in Chriſt, the meeting-place of theſe perfections, with a view to our redemption, *to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6. And how does he enjoy himſelf moſt ſweetly? It is even in Chriſt, *Behold mine Elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth; I was daily his delight*, ſays Chriſt, *while my delight was with the ſons of men*, Prov. viii. 30. They met together to put a crown of glory and honour upon each other. Adam's ſin and rebellion, and your ſin, man, woman, and my ſin (O that God diſhonouring evil ſin!) it had pulled off that crown of glory, as it were,

were, from the head of the great King, eternal and immortal, and thrown it into the mire, and ſtained it with filth and pollution: but behold theſe attributes of God meet together to take up the crown, to rub off the duſt and dung that ſin had caſt upon it, and to add ſome more ſparkling jewels to it than ever, and ſet it upon the head of their Sovereign, to the higheſt praiſes of his Mercy, Juſtice, Truth, Righteouſneſs, Grace, Love, Holineſs, Wiſdom, and all his other excellencies; that men and angels might ſing and ſay, *Glory to God in the higheſt, peace on earth, and good-will towards men;* that all the ſaints might ſing a conſort in praiſe of the meeting betwixt Mercy and Truth, Juſtice and Peace, ſaying, as it is Pſal. lxxxix. 14.

Juſtice and judgment of thy throne,
Shall be the dwelling-place;
Mercy, accompany'd with Truth,
Shall go before thy face.

And that every ſaint might ſing the fifty-ſeventh Pſalm, and ninth and tenth verſes.

I'll praiſe thee 'mong the people, LORD,
'Mong nations ſing will I;
For great to heav'n thy mercy is,
Thy truth doth reach the ſky.

They met together, to put a *crown of glory* upon the head of Chriſt, Heb. ii. 9. in whom they met. This aſſembly did conveen for the coronation of the Son of God: For, *he having humbled himſelf, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs; God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of* JESUS *every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is our* LORD, *to the glory of God the Father,* Phil. ii. 8,—13. Chriſt hath glorified the Father, and therefore the Father glorified him, *And now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him;*

and

and if God be glorified in him, God ſhall alſo glorify him in himſelf, John xiii. 31, 32. *Him that honoureth me, I will honour*, ſays God, 1 Sam. ii. 30. And in whom does this take place to perfection? It is in Chriſt; God is honoured moſt highly by him; and therefore he is honoured moſt highly; AMEN, *ſo let it be, and ſo ſhall it be.*——And therefore it is concerted in that meeting, that all the *ſaints* ſhall glorify him; hence that royal edict comes forth, *He is thy* LORD, *worſhip thou him*, Pſalm xlv. 11. And ſo we find them doing, Rev. v. 9. *Thou art worthy to take the book, and open the ſeals; for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood.*——It is concerted in that meeting, that all the *angels* ſhould glorify him; hence that edict comes forth, *Let all the angels of God worſhip him*, Heb. i. 6. And ſo we find them doing, Rev. v. 11, 12. *I heard the voice of many angels, and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands, ſaying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the* LAMB *that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſings.* ——It is concerted in this meeting, *that all the creatures in heaven and earth, ſea and land, ſhall glorify him*, as we ſee verſe 13.——But leſt the ſinful creatures upon earth, like you and me, ſhould not glorify him, or ſee his glory, it is concerted in that glorious meeting, that the Holy Ghoſt, the eternal Spirit, one God, equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son, ſhall be ſent down to the earth to glorify him, *He ſhall glorify me, for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhew it unto you*, John xvi. 14.——O! hath the Spirit of God been ſhewing any thing of Chriſt among you this day! any thing of his grace, fulneſs, and righteouſneſs, ſo as to glorify him, and make him glorious above all things to you: why then, we may reckon that you have found ſomething of the ſaving fruits of this glorious meeting; for the grand deſign of it was to glorify God in Chriſt, by the Spirit. They met to concert all things relating to the glory of the Father, in the Son, by the Holy Ghoſt. They met to conſult their own

own glory in Chriſt, that Mercy and Truth might be glorified in him.

2. They met together to concert their *proper work*, in carrying on this great end, of the glory of God, and his perfections. They do not meet together to ſit idle, and do nothing; no, they meet together to concert each of them their proper buſineſs, as Chriſt ſaid to his friends, *Wherefore was it that ye ſought me? Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Father's buſineſs!* So may I ſay here, the attributes of God met together, that they may go about God's buſineſs: what buſineſs? what work belongs to each of them ſeverally? Why, Mercy and Truth meet together, that they may be ſent upon an embaſſy together; *God ſhall ſend forth his mercy and his truth*, Pſalm lvii. 3.; his Mercy, to give in the promiſe of the goſpel; and his Truth to make out the ſame. Thus Mercy and Truth met together, that they may be ſent forth upon ſome gracious expedition, particularly both to be leaders and followers; to the remnant whom God appointed unto life. On the one hand, to be leaders; hence the pſalmiſt cries, *O ſend forth thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, and bring me to thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacle: then will I go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy.* Behold the wonderful buſineſs of Mercy and Truth, and the work they are ſet out upon, even mercifully to lead blind ſouls to God in Chriſt.——On the other hand, it is to be not only leaders, but followers; *Surely goodneſs and mercy ſhall follow me all the days of my life*, Pſalm xxiii. 6. If the child of God under any temptation, refuſe to be led by Mercy and Truth, and give up with them as his leaders, yet for all that, he ſhall not hinder them to be his followers: he may run out of God's way, but Mercy will follow and bring him back; and when Mercy follows, it is always in company with Truth. And, O! what think ye of this wonder! Mercy and Truth meet together, that they might go forth together, like two pages, to follow you, believer, through all the ſteps of your wilderneſs journey; *Goodneſs and mercy ſhall follow me all the days of my life.* Here is a piece of work, that Mercy

and

and Truth have met together for, even to be ſent forth, as leaders and followers of poor elect ſinners, till they be out of all hazard, *in* IMMANUEL'S *land, where glory dwells:* ſee Pſalm lxi. 7. But then, as *Mercy and Truth have met together.* to purſue their proper work; ſo, *Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other*, for purſuing of theirs. Well, ſay you, what is the work of Righteouſneſs and Peace? You have a word in the laſt verſe of this pſalm, where our text lies, *Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him, and ſet us in the way of his ſteps.* Divine Righteouſneſs diſplaying itſelf in Chriſt Jeſus, the *Sun of righteouſneſs*, goes before him to prepare his way, and bring us to God, and to our duty: and, to be ſure, when ever Righteouſneſs goes before, Peace will follow after; *for the fruit of righteouſneſs is peace*, whether it be imputed or implanted. Here then the work of Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſing each other, is to bring in theſe bleſſed effects in their order: we conſider them as divine perfections in the text, and in theſe effects, Righteouſneſs leads the van, and Peace comes up with the rear.

3. Theſe attributes conſpire harmoniouſly, they meet together and kiſs each other, for this reaſon, that by their meeting together, they may concert the *diſſolving of ſome unhappy meetings.* Theſe oppoſite-like attributes of God meet together, that ſome intimates may be ſeparate, and ſad and ſinful agreements may be broken up: there is a ſad meeting, and agreement we read of, Iſa. xxviii. 15. *We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement.* Why, is not this the caſe of all men by nature? Yea: but how is this ſad and miſerable meeting diſſolved? ſee verſe 16. *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a ſtone, a tried ſtone, a precious corner-ſtone, a ſure foundation.— Judgment alſo will I lay to the line, and righteouſneſs to the plummet.* Well, when Judgment and Righteouſneſs mercifully meet in Chriſt, the ſure Foundation, what will be the effect? It follows, verſe 17, 18. *The hail ſhall ſweep away the refuges of lies, and your covenant with death ſhall be diſanulled, and your agreement with hell ſhall not ſtand.* Whatever ſad aſpect this

ſcrip-

ſcripture may have to the deſpiſers of Chriſt, yet it hath a merciful aſpect to all the choſen of God, and all that deſire to live to the Lord Jeſus; yea, there is here a foundation of faith laid, for all that hear the joyful ſound, that whatever ſinful and miſerable meetings and agreements there are betwixt hell and them, betwixt death and them, yet it cannot ſtand before this glorious meeting, that was deſigned to break up and diſſolve the oppoſite meetings, that ſtand in a contrariety thereto.——There are many black unions, which this bleſſed union doth diſſolve; and there is no diſſolving of them, but by this bleſſed meeting.——There is the black union betwixt the ſinner and the law, which is the foundation of the black union, beiwixt the ſinner and his ſin: for, when the union betwixt him and the law is diſſolved, then the union betwixt him and his ſin is diſſolved, according to Rom. vi. 14. *Sin ſhall not have dominion unto you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* Now, what is the covenant of grace? Why, Mercy and Truth meeting together, Righteouſneſs and Peace, kiſſing each other in Chriſt Jeſus, is the ſubſtance, the marrow, the kernel of the covenant of grace; and it is this bleſſed meeting, that diſſolves the union betwixt the ſinner and the law, and ſo betwixt the ſinner and his ſin. O view the glorious deſign of this meeting? They met together that you might be ſeparated from your ſad aſſociates.—By nature you and the *devil* had met together, and you was a ſlave to him; and it is the virtue of this meeting in Chriſt, that diſſolves that; *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent.*—The *world* and you had met together, and you took pleaſure in your wicked companions, or elſe was wholly drowned in worldly affairs; O! it is the faith of this meeting that diſſolves that; *This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.*——The *curſe of God* and you had met together, and you lie under that curſe, till in the faith of this meeting, you ſhall ſee, *that Chriſt hath become a curſe for us.*——This meeting is deſigned for the breaking up of all theſe, and the like unhappy meetings. They met together in a glorious band, to looſe all the knots that the devil had tied.

4. Theſe glorious attributes of God do conſpire harmoniouſly, they meet together and kiſs each other, that they might concert and *carry on ſome happy meetings*, and make up *ſome bleſſed matches*. Theſe oppoſite-like attributes harmoniouſly meet, that oppoſites, and irreconileable things might meet together harmoniouſly, and kiſs each other, whether real or ſeeming oppoſites.

1*ſt*, There are *real* oppoſites that meet together harmoniouſly, by virtue of this glorious meeting; particularly theſe ſix.

(1.) Theſe oppoſite-like attributes meet together harmoniouſly, that oppoſite *natures* might meet together, even that God and man might meet together, and embrace each other. And there are theſe two meetings betwixt God and man, that were concerted at this meeting; the one is the meeting betwixt God and man, in the *hypoſtatical union* of the two natures of Chriſt, our IMMANUEL, God-man, in one perſon: this is the *great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh;* and this is the foundation of all other ſaving and merciful meetings betwixt God and man.—The other is the meeting between God and man in the *ſpiritual union* betwixt Chriſt and his members, in one myſtical perſon by the bond of the Spirit; *for he that is joined to the Lord is one ſpirit;* and this union is the foundation of all ſpiritual communion with God. We were not only at an infinite natural diſtance from God, as we are creatures, but at an infinite moral diſtance from him, as we are criminals and ſinners: but the attributes of God met together, and kiſſed each other in Chriſt, that God and man might meet together, in a ſpiritual union, and embrace each other in a ſweet ſpiritual communion.—Whatever ſpiritual communion you have with God, believer, this day, it flows from this glorious meeting of the divine attributes in Chriſt: and this union and communion is indeed a meeting of oppoſite natures; God became man, and took on our nature, and he makes us partakers of his nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.

(2.) Theſe oppoſite-like attributes met together and kiſſed each other, that oppoſite *wills* might meet, and em-

embrace each other. God's will and ours are oppoſite; this is indeed a branch of the former; but our wills are the great forts of corrupt nature, that ſtand out againſt God and his will; *we are enmity againſt God, and not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* Now, how comes the will to be reconciled to God's will? It is only by Chriſt, in whom the perfections of God meet together; *Thy people ſhall be willing* [Heb. WILLINGNESSES] *in the day of thy power,* Pſal. cx. 4.

(3.) Theſe oppoſite-like attributes meet and kiſs each other, that oppoſite *perſons, viz.* Jews and Gentiles, man and man, that were enemies and haters of one another, might meet together; that Jews and Gentiles might meet together, and men at variance with men might meet together; hence it is ſaid of him, in whom the attributes of God do meet, *He is our peace, who hath made both one,* [i. e. Jews and Gentiles] *and hath broken down the middle wall of partition: having aboliſhed in his fleſh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, for to make in himſelf, of twain, one new man, ſo making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the croſs, having ſlain the enmity thereby,* Eph. ii. 14,—16. If any thing ſlay the enmity to God or man, this is it.

(4.) Theſe oppoſite-like attributes of God meet and kiſs each other, that oppoſite *climates* might meet together; I mean, that heaven and earth might meet together; the church militant, and the church triumphant. Heaven and earth were at variance by our ſin; but now in Chriſt, ſaints in heaven, and ſaints on earth meet together. Hence we are ſaid to be *come to the general aſſembly, and church of the firſt-born, that are written in heaven,—to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect,* Heb. xii. 23. All believers are ſaid to be thus *come to mount Zion,—the heavenly Jeruſalem,* ver. 22. Yea, in Chriſt, angels in heaven, and men on earth do meet together: hence alſo believers are ſaid *to be come to the innumerable company of angels: and the angel of the Lord encamps about them that fear him,* Pſal. xxxiv. 7. Yea, all things in heaven and earth do meet together, and

kiſs each other in Chriſt, the meeting place; *Having made peace, by the blood of his croſs, by him to reconcile all things to himſelf; whether things in heaven, or things in earth*, Col. i. 20. Eph. i. 10. See how, upon the back of this meeting in the text, heaven and earth are ſaid to meet together in the following verſe, *Truth ſhall ſpring out of the earth; and Righteouſneſs ſhall look down from heaven*; which I inſiſt not upon here.

(5.) Theſe oppoſite-like attributes of God meet and kiſs each other, that oppoſite *covenants* might meet and embrace each other: even the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace, in Chriſt the meeting-place of the divine perfections. Theſe two covenants do, as it were, join hands and agree. Did the covenant of works command perfect obedience? and being broken, did it demand complete ſatisfaction? Behold Chriſt's obedience to the death anſwers both; God's covenant of grace diſpenſed to us, is juſt Chriſt fulfilling, for us, the covenant of works; and ſo in him they meet, and kiſs each other; *For he is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.* Again.

(6.) Theſe oppoſite-like attributes of God meet and kiſs each other, that oppoſite *thoughts* might meet togegether, and embrace each other; even God's thoughts and our thoughts; how oppoſite theſe are you may ſee, Iſa. lv. 8. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts; nor your ways my ways; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Some have preſumptuous thoughts, while they look only to God's mercy, and ſo they think certainly God will have mercy on them, though yet they are ſtrangers to Chriſt: theſe are oppoſite to God's thoughts; he hath no thoughts of ſhewing mercy that way. Others have deſpairing thoughts, while they look merely or moſtly to God's juſtice, and ſo their thought is, "O! will God have "mercy on the like of me! and, he cannot in juſtice "ſave the like of me!" Theſe thoughts are alſo oppoſite to God's thoughts; my thoughts are not your thoughts met together: why, let a man view the mercy and juſtice of God met together, and harmoniouſly kiſſing

kiſſing each other in Chriſt, ſo as to ſee *God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf.* If your thoughts be ſpiritualized, to diſcern mercy venting through the ſacrifice, that ſatisfies divine juſtice, then God's thoughts and your thoughts meet together and kiſs each other. ——Thus the divine attributes meet together harmoniouſly, that real oppoſites may meet together harmoniouſly. This glorious meeting lays a foundation for theſe happy meetings.

2*dly*, There are ſeeming oppoſites, that meet together harmoniouſly, by virtue of this glorious meeting; as,

(1.) Theſe oppoſite-like perfections of God meet together, and kiſs each other harmoniouſly, that oppoſite-like *providences* might meet together, and kiſs each other. There are frowning providences, and and ſmiling providences; croſſes and comforts in the believer's lot: here is a providence that favours the promiſe, and there is a providence that ſeems to contradict the promiſe: at one time the believer is exalted, and his mountain ſtandeth ſtrong; at another time he is troubled, depreſſed, and caſt down. Well, how ſhall theſe unite and cement together? Why, they meet and embrace each other in Chriſt, the meeting-place; for *all things work together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpoſe.* Hence we will find, not only light and darkneſs in the believer's lot, but ſometimes light and darkneſs meeting together, Zech. xiv. 7. there you read *of a day, that is neither day nor night; yet a day known to the Lord; neither clear nor dark, but at evening time it ſhall be light.* There evening darkneſs uſhering in the morning light. Hence they have occaſion to *ſing of mercy and of judgment;* becauſe of their meeting together, and kiſſing each other, and working together for good. Behold the croſs and the crown meeting together.

(2.) Theſe oppoſite-like perfections of God meet together, and kiſs each other, that oppoſite-like *deſires* may meet, and embrace each other, while Mercy deſires our life and Juſtice ſeems to demand our death; theſe are reconciled only in Chriſt, in whom Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace, meet and embrace each other.

other. But look to our desire of God's glory, and our own salvation, men and angels could never have contrived how these two desires could be reconciled, if Mercy and Truth had not met together, and kissed each other; for the glory of God's truth and righteousness, in the threatning of his law, seems to rest satisfied with nothing less than our destruction; and therefore to desire God's glory, would have been to desire our own damnation; and consequently in desiring our own salvation, we must have desired God's dishonour: but now this blessed contrivance of infinite Wisdom, let us see how these two are not only reconciled, but made inseparable; *Having set forth Christ to be the propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness in the remission of sins.*

(3.) These seemingly opposite attributes meet and kiss each other, that seemingly opposite *graces* might meet and embrace each other: for example, *reverence* and *confidence;* how shall *fear* and *reverence* meet together with *faith* and *confidence?* Why, *Truth* and *Righteousness* are at the meeting; and therefore *fear* and *reverence* becomes us; but *Mercy* and *Peace* are also on the bench, therefore *faith* and holy *confidence* may boldly step in; *We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*

(4.) These opposite-like attributes meet and embrace each other, that opposite-like *duties* may meet together; *prayer* and *praise* seem opposite duties in some cases; prayer supposes our wants to be great, otherwise, why should we pray?——Praise supposes our enjoyments to be great, otherwise, why should we praise?—— Well, Truth and Righteousness, these awful attributes, present at the meeting, say, We have nothing in ourselves, therefore we ought to pray; but Mercy and Peace say, we have all, we have enough in Christ, and therefore we ought to praise. *Humiliation* and *gloriation* seem opposite duties; but the seemingly opposite attributes of God meeting together, bring also these duties to meet and embrace each other.—— Is Truth and Righteousness in the company with Mercy and Peace? then humiliation is our duty: but is Mercy

cy and Peace in company with Truth and Righteouſneſs? Then gloriation is our duty. *Let him that glories, glory in the Lord.*

(5.) Theſe ſeemingly oppoſite attributes of God meet and embrace each other, that ſeemingly oppoſite *experiences* may meet and embrace each other, and be reconciled, though ſeemingly irreconcileable. There are ſad experiences, and ſweet experiences: O? here is the ſad experience of a guilty conſcience, a powerful corruption, and a conquering temptation: can ever that be reconciled with the experience of holy peace, pardon, and victory? Yea, here is a foundation laid for the reconciliation of theſe oppoſites. If Juſtice and Mercy have met together, then a guilty conſcience, and a mercy-ſeat may meet together; a prevalent corruption, and pardoning, purifying blood may meet together; as they did in the pſalmiſt's caſe; *Iniquities prevail againſt me: but as for our tranſgreſſions thou ſhalt purge them away*, Pſalm lxv. 3.—The ſad experience of fatherly anger, or of the feeling of divine wrath, may meet with the ſweet experience of felt love and favour; for Mercy and Juſtice are met together, Iſa. liv. 7, 8.—The ſad experience of perplexing thoughts may meet with the ſweet experience of ſpiritual conſolation, and be ſwallowed up therein; ſince Truth and Juſtice have met with Mercy and Peace: Hence it was that theſe two met together in David; *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul*, Pſalm xcix. 19. O! is ſuch a ſad experience conſiſtent with an intereſt in Chriſt? Why, both terrible and amiable attributes of God meet together in Chriſt; and therefore it is not ſtrange, that the ſaddeſt and ſweeteſt experiences meet together, ſo as not to be inconſiſtent with the ſtate of a believer that is in Chriſt. To ſee awful Juſtice, and lovely Mercy meeting together, in a ſweet-ſmelling ſacrifice, is a greater wonder, than to ſee your ſaddeſt and ſweeteſt experiences meeting in Chriſt, to make up a HALLELUJAH, *Praiſe ye the Lord*: and the former meeting is the reaſon of this.

(6.) Theſe irreconcileable-like attributes of God meet

meet and embrace each other, that irreconcileable-like *ſcriptures* might meet together and embrace each other: How ſhall Exod. xxxiv. 7. *He will by no means clear the guilty*, (or, juſtify the ſinner,) be reconciled with Rom. iv. 5. where he is ſaid *to juſtify the ungodly?* O! how can theſe two oppoſites meet together?—Why, Mercy and Truth have met together in Chriſt, to make up a match betwixt them: a *ranſom is found*, a *propitiation is ſet forth*; why then, theſe oppoſite-like ſcriptures may meet together, and kiſs each other *He will by no means clear the guilty*, without a ranſom, a propitiation. Well, is the ranſom found, and propitiation ſet forth? then he will juſtify the ungodly on that ground: *Deliver his ſoul from going down to the pit, I have found out a ranſom.* Now he can juſtify the ſinner, and be juſt in ſo doing, while he draws him in to Chriſt by faith, Romans iii. 25, 26.——Thus you ſee the reaſons of the meeting. In a word, they meet together upon a deſign to bring the greateſt good out of the greateſt evil, and the higheſt glory out of the deepeſt miſery, to the praiſe of all God's glorious perfections.

V. The *fifth* thing propoſed, was the *application*, in a few *inferences*. Is it ſo, that in the ſalvation of ſinners by Jeſus Chriſt, the glorious attributes and perfections of God do thus harmoniouſly conſpire, and embrace each other? Then hence we may ſee,

1. What a *dreadful evil* SIN is, which ſets all the attributes of God, as it were, in oppoſition to one another, and puts all the world into confuſion, and every thing out of order; it ſets heaven and earth, and all things in them at variance, one againſt another: to think light of ſin, is to think light of this glorious meeting of divine attributes, that met together to break this rebellion, and take order with this horrid inſurrection againſt heaven. O! what a great matter is the ſalvation of a ſinner! ere that can take place, this grand meeting muſt be called; all the injured attributes of God muſt have an honourable reparation.—Juſtice muſt be ſatisfied; Truth vindicated; Righteouſneſs

teousneſs cleared; and in order to all this, a Surety muſt be provided, even a God in our nature: the guilt muſt be imputed to him, and the iniquity of us all muſt be laid upon him; and then a bloody tragedy muſt be acted upon his ſoul and body, till he ſink to death under the weight of infinite wrath.

2. Hence ſee, what a *wonderful Perſon* our LORD JESUS CHRIST is, in whom ſo many wonders meet together. It is in him, that Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace, do meet together, and kiſs each other; here all the illuſtrious perfections of the divine nature do glorioufly conſpire; here is the bright conſtellation of all the divine attributes ſhining forth in him; and every ſtar performs its revolution in this orb. Behold in him the bright glory and excellency of God's grace and love; a whole Trinity in concert, to perform each Perſon his own part, and each attribute its own work; and *Chriſt, the image of the inviſible God, ſet forth to be a* GLORIOUS THEATRE, on which men and angels might ſee the ſplendour of the tranſaction: *He is the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon:* here is the *great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh*, and all his attributes meeting together and kiſſing each other in our IMMANUEL, *God-man.* There are two things meet in Chriſt, which ſhould make him wonderful to us: the one is, all our *ſins* meet together on him, that they may be *condemned*, according to that word, Iſaiah liii. 6. *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all;* (or, *made them to* MEET *on him.*) The other is, all the *attributes of God* meet in him, that they may be *glorified.* And indeed there is no ſaving or ſatisfying knowledge of any property of God, but what is to be had in Chriſt: to ſee God to be a merciful, juſt, true, righteous, good, and holy God is neither a ſaving, nor a ſatisfying ſight; unleſs we ſee theſe attributes meeting in Chriſt for our ſalvation; and to ſee this, is to ſee the glory of God, in the face of Chriſt; here ſee the glory of divine Mercy! What is pardoning mercy? "It is God's "free, gracious acceptance of a ſinner, upon ſatiſ- "faction made to his juſtice, in the blood of Jeſus."

Nor is any diſcovery of mercy, but as relating to the ſatisfaction of juſtice, conſiſtent with the glory of God: mercy cannot be ſeen ſavingly, but as meeting with juſtice in Chriſt. Here alſo we ſee the glory of divine truth in the exact accompliſhment of all his threatenings and promiſes: that original threatening and commination, whence all other threatenings flow, Geneſis ii. 17. *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die*, backed with a curſe, *For curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, is in him accompliſhed fully, and the truth of God therein cleared to our ſalvation, while *he taſted death for us, and he was made a curſe for us*: ſo that in every threatening his truth is made glorious. And as to the promiſes, *they are all Yea and Amen in Chriſt Jeſus, to the glory of God by us*, 2 Cor. i. 20. And ſo of all the other attributes of God, they are made glorious, and exalted in Chriſt to our ſalvation. Hence, when Chriſt deſired his Father to glorify his name, John xii. 28. to make his name, that is, his nature, properties, and perfections all glorious in the work of redemption, that he had in hand; he was inſtantly anſwered from heaven, *I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again*: I will give my attributes their utmoſt glory in thee.

3. Hence ſee the difference betwixt the *law* and the *goſpel*: one great difference betwixt them lies in this, that in the law, the ſinner that hath violated the ſame, may ſee Truth ſtanding engaged againſt him, but no Mercy in company with Truth; and Righteouſneſs in arms againſt him, but no Peace in company with Righteouſneſs; *Juſtice without mercy, and war without peace to the ſinner*, is the *motto* of the law; for therein Truth and Righteouſneſs meet together, but Mercy and Peace are not at the meeting; and ſo the language of the law, to you that are out of Chriſt, and under the law, is, No mercy, no peace, but the wrath of God, the vengeance of God, the curſe of God, upon you; and that ſo ſure, as God is a God of truth and righteouſneſs. There is the law. But in the goſpel, Mercy and Peace come into the meeting, and make up a match betwixt all the oppo-

oppoſite-parties, to the higheſt glory of God, and the greateſt happineſs of the ſinner; and they ſeal the match with a kiſs of infinite complacency; ſo that the ſum of the goſpel is this, *Mercy and Truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.*

4. Hence we may ſee what is the fountain-head, and foundation of all *true communion* and *fellowſhip* with God and man. This glorious meeting is the foundation of all other happy meetings: fellowſhip with God, and an happy meeting with him, is a ſtream that flows from this fountain. We could never have met with God, or got a kindly kiſs, or embrace, in the arms of his favour and love, if this divine meeting and embracement had not made way for it. Fellowſhip with man, or the communion of ſaints, is a rivolet that flows from this ſpring. When ſaints meet together for prayer or praiſes, under the influence of the Spirit, and under a gale of heaven, when their hearts are fired with love to God, and to one another in him; what is this? It is juſt a live coal caſt in among them, from the altar, Chriſt Jeſus, where all the attributes of God meet together, and kiſs each other; and hence true fellowſhip with God, and with the ſaints, are both declared to be in and through Chriſt Jeſus; ——*That which we have heard and ſeen, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowſhip with us: and truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 John i. 3. The harmony of the attributes of God in Chriſt, is the fountain of all the harmony among the ſaints. The little harmony, that takes place among them in our day, and the rarity of holy fellowſhip-meetings, flows from the little faith of this heavenly divine meeting: for all the ſaints, that are under the lively views thereof, cannot but deſire to meet together, and embrace each other harmoniouſly, in the arms of mutual love.

5. Hence ſee the *malignity* of the ſin of *unbelief*, the great employment whereof is, to ſpoil the harmony of the divine perfections, and to do its utmoſt to diſſolve that glorious meeting, and ſeparate what God hath joined, ſaying, in effect, they have not met

together nor kiſſed each other. This we may diſcern in the unbelief, whether of ſecure or awakened ſinners: See it in the unbelief of the ſecure ſinner, who ſets Truth and Righteouſneſs out of the meeting, ſaying, *God is a merciful God, and I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my own heart, adding drunkenneſs to thirſt.* Thus they hope in God's mercy, and ſpeak peace to themſelves, while they never view the truth and righteouſneſs of God, and how the credit thereof ſhall be ſalved, or the honour repaired: and hence, as faith is ſaid to *ſet to the ſeal that God is true*, or, that he is a *God of truth*; ſo unbelief is ſaid to make *God a liar*: to fancy that God will have mercy on their ſouls, without regarding the truth of his threatenings, is to make God a liar, and ſay, Mercy and Truth have not met together: to think that God will be at peace with them, while his Righteouſneſs and Juſtice are not ſatisfied, is to make God a liar, and ſay, Righteouſneſs and Peace have not met together. Thus the unbelief of the ſecure ſinner puts Truth and Righteouſneſs out of the meeting.——Again, on the other hand, the unbelief of the awakened ſinner, puts Mercy and Peace out of the meeting, ſaying, O! he is a God of truth, and how ſhall he have mercy on the like of me! He is a God of awful juſtice and righteouſneſs, and how will he be at peace with me? What is the language of this, but that Mercy and Peace have not met with Truth and Righteouſneſs? Here is a making God a liar alſo, and ſeparating what God hath in the goſpel declared to be joined. Behold, then, the malignity of unbelief; it breaks the glorious meeting, and will not let them kiſs one another. The preſuming ſinner will not let God have the glory of his truth and righteouſneſs.—The deſpairing ſinner will not let God have the glory of his mercy and grace; both are in a concert with the devil to break the harmony of the meeting. But, O! may virtue come from that glorious meeting in Chriſt, to the poor ſinful meeting in this houſe, for daſhing our unbelief to pieces, that we may ſee Mercy and

and Truth met together, Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſing each other.

6. Hence ſee ſure and noble ground, for the boldneſs and confidence of *faith* in Chriſt; *In whom we have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence by the faith of him*, Eph. ii. 12. Here is an anſwer to all objections of unbelief and diffidence; the chief whereof lies here: O! ſays unbelief, may I, ſinful guilty I, lay hold on the promiſe of mercy and peace in the goſpel, when I ſee the great ordinance of the divine threatening hard charged with the truth and righteouſneſs of God, and ready to be diſcharged againſt me, with thunder and lightening, ſaying, No mercy, no peace; *He that made thee will not have mercy upon thee: And there is no peace, ſays my God, to the wicked?* Mercy and peace in the promiſe then, ſays unbelief, cannot take place, with reſpect to me; for truth and righteouſneſs, in the threatening, ſtand in the way, *like a flaming ſword, to keep the way of the tree of life:* Nay, but ſays faith, Here the promiſe and the threatening have met together, and kiſſed each other in Chriſt; mercy in the promiſe, and juſtice in the threatening, have met and agreed in him; *In whom all the promiſes are Yea and Amen:* and in whom all the threatenings are fully executed, by drawing out his heart-blood. Thus then, *we have boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way, which he hath conſecrated for us through the vail of his fleſh: Therefore let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith*, Heb. x. 19, 20, 22. O! what ground for the boldneſs and aſſured confidence of faith, with particular application, notwithſtanding of the threatening? The threatening hath nothing to ſay to me, ſaith faith, for Chriſt hath ſpoken with it already, and ſpoken it out of breath; he hath left it ſpeechleſs and breathleſs, not a breathing of wrath in it towards me. The believer may have a million of doubts, while his unbelief keeps the chair; but let gallant faith come in, and take the room, it will diſpel them all: let once unbelief break the harmony of this meeting of divine attributes in Chriſt, and then nothing but doubts of

God's

God's favour and mercy muſt enſue; but let faith view the harmony, and ſee them meeting and kiſſing each other; and then according to the meaſure of faith, ſuch will be the meaſure of holy boldneſs, confidence, and perſuaſion of the favour, mercy, and good will of God in Chriſt, with particular application to the perſon himſelf. Take away unbelief from faith, and then not a ſingle doubt will remain behind: unbelief creates all the doubts that are in the believer; his faith hath no part in them. The general doubtſome faith of the Papiſts, is not faith, but unbelief; and therefore no wonder that our forefathers abjured it in our National Covenant. Behold the ſure ground and firm bottom that faith ſtands upon, even the mutual meeting, and embracement among the divine perfections in Chriſt. If you break and ſeparate the meeting by unbelief, then your confidence is broken, and your peace with God marred; but if you keep them together in your view, by faith in Chriſt, then you have boldneſs, confidence, and affiance on this ground; yea, then God in Chriſt, and you meet together, and kiſs each other.

7. Hence ſee what is the *beſt mark* of a believer in Chriſt. For your trial and examination, try it juſt by this, What view have you got of this glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and of the attributes of God meeting and embracing each other in him? Have you ſeen the glory, and felt the virtue of this happy meeting?

(1.) Have you *ſeen the glory* of it? When once in a day, you had ſeen the attributes of God in arms againſt you, becauſe of your ſinful rebellion againſt God; and when you had ſeen the truth of God, pronouncing the ſentence of the law, and his righteouſneſs and juſtice ready to inflict the ſentence, and execute the ſame with curſes and vengeance, making you deſpair of mercy, and give up with all hope and expectation of peace with God, by the law of works; have you thereupon got a view of the harmonious meeting of theſe attributes of God, in Chriſt Jeſus, as the Surety, the Sacrifice, the Ranſom, the Propitiation,

tion, in whom the truth and veracity of God is accompliſhed, and the righteouſneſs and juſtice of God is ſatisfied, and ſo mercy and peace vented gloriouſly, without detriment to any other excellency or perfection of God? Hath nothing ſatisfied your conſcience, but the view of this meeting betwixt Mercy and Juſtice, in the death of Chriſt, and kiſſing each other in his mediation? Hath God and you met together this way, and made your heart joyfully to kiſs and embrace this wonderful device, as worthy of God, and ſuitable to you? Have you ſeen this glory at this rate? Then in God's name, I pronounce you a believer in Chriſt: *For God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into your heart, to give you the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Chriſt;* and Chriſt and you have met together, and kiſſed each other; whether it was in the day of firſt believing, when you fled to him for refuge, or in the day of after manifeſtation, when, upon the back of diſmal hiding on God's part, or grievous backſliding on yours, the Lord drew aſide the vail, and gave you a glance of his glory; whether it was by ſome word of grace, ſweetly and powerfully coming in, and opening your underſtanding to ſee this harmonious meeting, or by ſome ſweet droppings of the blood of ſprinkling upon your conſcience, by which blood, the meeting is cemented together. Have you ſeen this glory, whether in a ſecret corner, or public ordinance; whether at the market croſs of the goſpel, where this glorious meeting is proclaimed, or at a communion-table, where it is ſealed? It is all a matter, it was heaven begun.

(2.) Have you *felt the virtue*, as well as ſeen the glory of this harmonious meeting of the divine attributes in Chriſt? 2 Cor. iii. 18. *Beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Surely if you have ſeen this glory, you have felt ſomething of this virtue by changing you *from glory to glory.* It is true, many that have got a diſcovery of this glory of the Lord, can never think that they have felt the ſanctifying virtue thereof, and this keeps them down in the

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pit of diſcouragement: it is true, they that are not ſanctified and made holy, they diſcover, that they never beheld this glory of the Lord: for this meeting of attributes, makes a meeting of graces, in the perſon that ſees it ſavingly. But you muſt remember, That this virtue will never be perfectly felt, till this glory be perfectly beheld in heaven, where *we ſhall be like him, becauſe we ſhall ſee him as he is.* And therefore, ſince you cannot judge and try yourſelf by a perfect ſanctification, try it by the beginnings of it; this transforming virtue, this ſanctifying virtue is preſent with you, though you cannot diſcern it. But that you may, through grace, diſcern ſomething of it, let me aſk you what makes you wreſtle in ſecret ſometimes againſt ſin, if it be not ſome ſanctifyiug virtue? What makes the prevalence of ſin to humble you to the duſt? What makes you lament your own unholineſs and impurity? What makes you long and groan for complete victory over, and freedom from ſin? What makes you glad of any victory over your corruption, when this glory ſhines? What makes your heart to riſe againſt ſin? and when ſin prevails, what makes you find yourſelf uneaſy, and out of your element, always till the Lord return, and until you get a new dip in the Jordan of the blood of the Lamb? You have no mercy on your luſts, and are at no peace with them, but ſtill crying, Vengeance upon them! Why, it is juſt the ſanctifying virtue, that flows from this view of the glory of God in Chriſt, in whom Mercy and Peace meet with Truth and Righteouſneſs. If you fall and ſtumble at any time, believer, is it not like the ſtumbling of a horſe, that makes you run the faſter? ſo as you get more good of one fall, than a natural man will get of a hundred duties, while it makes you always the more humble, and watchful, and circumſpect, and dependent.——Why, by all this, it appears (whatever be the defect of your ſanctification) that having beheld the glory of God, you are *changed into the ſame image from glory to glory:* you have ſeen the glory, and felt the virtue of this harmonious meeting of divine attributes in Chriſt. But then again,

8. Hence,

8. Hence, we may see ground of *terror* to all Christless, unbelieving souls, that never have seen the glory, nor felt the virtue of this harmonious meeting, and live careless about either of these. What shall I say? *If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, should shine in to them*, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. It may be, you are presuming upon the mercy of God, while yet your eyes are blinded, that you do not see the truth of his threatenings standing against you: and therefore, O blasphemer! do you think, that he will be a God of mercy, and not a God of truth? Nay, his mercy will never be vented, unless the glory of his truth be salved. Perhaps you are speaking peace to yourself, saying, *I shall have peace*, while yet your eyes are blinded, that you do not see how God's being at peace with a sinner is consistent with his righteousness, in taking vengeance upon sin. O then, blasphemer and presumer! do you think, that God will be a God of *peace*, and not a God of *righteousness?* Know it, then, in the Lord's name, O sinful unbelieving wretch, that as there is no mercy for you, to the discredit of God's truth? so no peace, to the dishonour of his righteousness. You expect mercy and peace separate from truth and righteousness; and therefore mercy and truth shall be separate from you; and truth and righteousness will meet with you in fury, and with a vengeance.——Your false hope of mercy and peace, makes you merciful to your lusts, and at peace with your idols: but the truth and righteousness of God, which you exclude from the meeting, will hide mercy and peace for ever from your eyes: Justice instead of mercy, war instead of peace, will ensue; for truth and righteousness will execute judgment upon you, for the abuse of mercy and peace; while through unbelief, you do not see, or approve their meeting together and kissing each other in Christ. While you are in this case, you cannot meet with God, though you may meet with his people at ordinances, or at a communion-table: yet God and you never met together:

nay, you have other company; the devil and you meet together; and your luſts and you embrace each other; the world and you meet together, and its vanities and you do kiſs each other; the law and you have met together, and its curſe and you do embrace each other: but becauſe you do not ſee the terrible curſes and threatenings, that you are under, remember, that in a ſhort while, death and you will meet together, and its cold arms and you muſt embrace each other; and if this goſpel be ſtill hid to you, then after that, hell and you will meet together, and the flames of divine wrath and you will embrace each other to eternity; and the motto written upon the door of your hell, will be, *The vengeance of Truth and Righteouſneſs, for the abuſe of Mercy and Peace.* Let this word of terror ſink into your conſcience, O graceleſs, Chriſtleſs, unbelieving ſoul, that never ſaw the glory, nor felt the virtue of this bleſſed meeting; and Gallio-like, *care for none of theſe things.* But on the other hand,

9. Hence, from this doctrine, ſee ground of *comfort* to all believers in Chriſt, who have ſeen the glory, and felt the virtue of this harmonious meeting of divine attributes in Chriſt. This doctrine is as comfortable to you, as it is terrible to others. Can you ſay before God, that thoſe two marks are your experiences? Then I can ſay, that all the comforts, that iſſue from that glorious meeting in Chriſt, belong to you; and God allows you *ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge, to the hope ſet before you:* for that city of refuge, to which you have fled, is the centre of the meeting, and the triſting-place, where they kiſs one another harmoniouſly. Why, ſay you, *What concern have I in their meeting, and embracing each other?* O believer, they met together for your ſake, and kiſſed one another out of kindneſs to you: for there were no real jarring among them; but all the apparent jarring was about you; and how they ſhould be glorified in your ſalvation: and when infinite wiſdom found the ranſom, and ſo the way, how they ſhould all be glorified, in your eternal happineſs, then they hugged each other

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in their arms, as it were, in a rapture of joy, for your ſake; *His delights were with the ſons of men*, Prov. viii. 31. It was not *one* attribute only, that had its delight, ſatisfaction, and glory; it is *delights*, in the plural number; for all the attributes of God had their delights: and whereabout was it? Why, the council of peace was concerning you; *For his delights were with the* SONS *of* MEN. And you having ſeen the glory of this device, and felt ſomething of the virtue thereof, God and you have met together, and Chriſt and you have kiſſed each other: he hath embraced you, and you have embraced him; and that embracement is a pledge and earneſt, that he and you will meet together in heaven, and embrace each other to eternity. This meeting and embracement is founded upon the harmonious meeting and embracement of the divine attributes in Chriſt; and therefore, it ſhall be ſure, abiding, and everlaſting; and all theſe attributes are engaged for your comfort and ſupport: and this glory of the Lord, you ſhall for ever behold; for Chriſt, in whom all theſe glorious perfections meet together, hath prayed for it; *Father, I will, that theſe, whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me*, John xvii. 24. Here then, believer, is ground of comfort to you, in every caſe. Comfort againſt *deſertion*; it is long ſince Chriſt and you met together, and kiſſed each other? Behold, here is the reaſon; *He will never altogether leave you, nor forſake you*; but certainly meet with you, now and then, when he ſees it fit; and give you the other kiſs of his infinitely bleſſed lips, and embrace of his arms; till you come to the intimate, immediate embracements of his love in glory: why? becauſe, *Mercy and truth are met together; righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other*. So ſure as Mercy and Truth are met together, as ſurely will the Lord meet with you.——Here is comfort againſt the *law*, when it comes in as a covenant upon your conſcience; ſaying, *Pay what thou oweſt, or otherwiſe thou art curſed, and muſt go to hell*: and the law, ſpeaking

in the name of Truth and Righteouſneſs, ſeems terrible. But you may ſoon anſwer by faith, and ſay,—"O law, the demand is juſt indeed, and agreeable to "Truth and Righteouſneſs; but you miſtake the perſon; for Truth and Righteouſneſs have already met "with Mercy and Peace, in the Perſon of Chriſt, my "huſband, who endured all my hell, and became a "curſe for me; and therefore, I have no ground to "fear the hell thou threatens, nor the curſe thou denounces, nor any liableneſs thereto."——Here is comfort againſt *Satan*, and his temptations: for this bleſſed meeting in Chriſt did concert his ruin, and the bruiſing of his head; *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent*, Geneſis iii. 15. *Satan ſhall be bruiſed under your feet ſhortly*——Here is comfort againſt *church-diviſions* and *commotions;* when neither miniſters nor private Chriſtians do meet together, or embrace one another with love and amity. Is this ſad and afflicting to you? Here is a meeting, that may give you comfort in that caſe: for no member of that meeting will ever differ among themſelves, or caſt out with you.——Here is comfort againſt your *jarring with friends;* what do I know, but there is ſome here, that cannot get lived in peace with ſuch a friend or relation; nor their Chriſtian liberty enjoyed, becauſe of their frowns; and perhaps, they are as aliens to you, not in ſpeaking terms with you; you cannot meet together with them *cordially*, nor embrace one another *amicably;* but let this be your comfort, in that caſe; *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other;* and you have got a kiſs by the bye, and that is better than all the friends in the world.——Here is comfort againſt *public calamities*, that ſeem to be approaching, or perſonal trials, that may be coming upon you.——Here is a cordial, though *affliction* and you meet together; though in a little, *death* and you meet together; yet this meeting of divine attributes in Chriſt, your glorious Head, ſpeaks comfort, and ſafety to you in every caſe: tho' you ſhould die diſtracted, this meeting cannot be diſſolved; and you having ſeen the glory, and felt the

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virtue thereof, ſhall be ſure to enjoy the benefit of it to eternity; *Yea, ſurely goodneſs and mercy ſhall follow you, all the days of your life, and you ſhall dwell in the houſe of the Lord for ever.*

10. The laſt inference is, hence ſee the *duty* of all that hear and know this joyful ſound: Never was there a ſweeter ſound in heaven, or in earth: and what is the duty of all you that *hear* it? Surely the news of ſuch a glorious and harmonious meeting of the divine perfections, about the ſalvation of ſinners, in and by Chriſt Jeſus, ſhould be joyfully received. Here is *the good tidings of great joy unto all people*, Luke ii. 10. When Elizabeth the mother of John, and Mary the mother of Jeſus our Lord, met together and ſaluted each other, *the babe leapt in Elizabeth's womb for joy.* Behold, here is yet a more wonderful meeting, and ſalutation among the jarring-like attributes and perfections of God; and ſurely if the babe of grace be in *your heart, it will leap for joy*, when you perceive ſuch a bleſſed meeting and ſalutation. O! may it not bring our heart to our mouth, and make it flutter within us, when we hear of ſuch a ſalutation as this, *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have embraced each other.*——And again, What is your duty, believer, who not only hears, but *knows* this joyful ſound? your duty is, not only to rejoice, in this matchleſs harmonious conjunction of divine attributes in Chriſt; but to examplify the ſame, by an harmonious conjunction of graces and holy virtues in you. Let Mercy and Truth meeting together, as divine attributes, in Chriſt, be examplified by Mercy and Truth meeting together, as divine virtues in you: let Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſing each other in him, be exemplified by Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſſing each other in you. Let the meeting of Mercy and Truth engage you to be merciful and true: *Merciful, becauſe your heavenly Father is merciful:* and *true*, becauſe *he deſires truth in the inward parts.* Let the embraces of Righteouſneſs and Peace engage you, to be righteous and peaceable; that is, to be ſtudents of Purity and

Peace;

Peace; for *the wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, and then peaceable*, James iii. 17. It is declared in the verſe following our text, that it is the deſign of theſe perfections of God, *looking down harmoniouſly from heaven*, to make ſuitable graces *ſpring up from the earth: truth ſhall ſpring out of the earth, and righteouſneſs ſhall look down from heaven.* When the Sun of righteouſneſs, in whom all the excellencies of God do ſhine, looks down; then as the natural ſun ſhedding its influences, makes fruit to ſpring up from the earth: ſo the Sun of righteouſneſs looking down and ſhedding abroad his influences, makes Truth, and all the reſt of the fruits of the Spirit, to ſpring out of the earth, out of the heart, the ſoil where they are ſown, in regeneration, O! does Mercy look down from heaven to you, in friendſhip with Truth? ſhall not this Mercy make you merciful to the bodies and and ſouls of others, by doing them all the temporal and ſpiritual good that you can? And ſhall God manifeſt his Truth, in conjunction with Mercy towards you? and will you not be a friend to Truth, even to all the precious truths of his goſpel? Shall not Truth in oppoſition to hypocriſy, be your ſtudy, and Truth in oppoſition to error, be your concern? and this Truth, in conjunction with Mercy; for, when Truth is in any hazard, ſhould not Mercy to your own ſoul, and the ſouls of others, make you zealous for it? and mercy to your children, and the generation that is to come after you, on whom we ſhew no mercy, if truth be not tranſmitted purely to them, as it was by our fore-fathers to us, at the expence of their blood; however now, the waters of the ſanctuary are puddled?—Again, does Righteouſneſs and Peace look down from heaven, kindly embracing each other in your behalf, believer? And ſhall not you be a ſtudent of Righteouſneſs, in oppoſition to all unrighteous and unholy ways; and of Peace, in oppoſition to contention and diſcord: *As much as poſſible, follow peace with all men, and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* Does God glorify his righteouſneſs towards you? and will you ſtudy no righteouſneſs in your converſation towards God and man? Does God ſpeak peace to you, and will

will you be at war with him; and love to live in war with any of his? Shall that be the diſpoſition of any, with whom God is at peace? *O tell it not in Gath!*— Surely there is none here, that have taſted of this ſweet peace of God, but they would deſire to live at peace with all men; and particularly with all the ſaints.— They would deſire to ſee all the honeſt miniſters of Scotland, meeting together more kindly than they do, and embracing each other. Some, indeed, are at this time reproached, as *enemies to peace in the church* *; but the matter is, Peace muſt not be ſtudied ſeparately from Righteouſneſs, nor Mercy ſeparately from Truth; but all as meeting, and embracing one another: for Mercy and Peace, without Truth and Righteouſneſs, is a cruel conſpiracy againſt God and man.

Now, certain things have paſt concerning the Truths of God, and the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt in our day, which ſome think will ſtand infamous till the judgment of the great day; and this Truth and Righteouſneſs, being the great miniſterial truſt, ſome chuſed rather to be reproached by the world, than be challenged by God and their own conſcience, as betrayers of the truſt. However, O believer, ſtudy you through grace, to get a match made up between Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace in you, ſeeing there can be no merciful Peace to the prejudice of righteous Truth: and ſtudy to get all theſe attributes of God, examplified in your heart and life; and the ſeal and impreſs thereof upon your ſoul; you being united to Chriſt, in whom all theſe glorious excellencies of God do meet together with harmonious embracements. *Out of Chriſt's fulneſs, do you receive, and grace for grace:* as the child receives member for member from the father, and

* See the reaſon of this aſſigned, Sermon IV. intitled, *Chriſt the People's Covenant*, in a foot note.—The hearty friends to the doctrine of grace, in thoſe days, were very unjuſtly accuſed with Antinomianiſm; and the ſtrenuous ſupporters of the doctrine of free juſtification, through the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, without the works of the law, were injuriouſly calumniated as *enemies to holineſs*, and as *diſturbers of the peace of the church*.—This matter is further cleared up, in a note, about the middle of theſe Sermons, intitled, *Law-death, and Goſpel-life*.

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the paper letter for letter from the preſs: ſo beholding his glory, be you changed into the ſame image, by receiving mercy for mercy, truth for truth, righteouſneſs for righteouſneſs, and peace for peace; out of his fulneſs, do you receive grace for grace, holineſs for holineſs, and an holy virtue ſuitable to every holy perfection, that is in him; and all theſe harmoniouſly meeting together and kiſſing each other in you. Let no heavenly grace, or holy duty be excluded out of the meetings: let faith and repentance meet together; let love and new obedience kiſs each other; let knowledge and practice meet together, and prayer and praiſes embrace each other; yea, let oppoſite-like graces meet harmoniouſly in you; let humility and boldneſs meet together; let godly ſorrow and holy joy embrace each other. Here is the goſpel-holineſs we call you to, in a ſuitableneſs to theſe harmonious attributes of God in Chriſt. If the world call you *Antinomians* know it is *the will of God, that by well-doing, you put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men*, 1 Peter ii. 15. Let the mouth that reproaches the goſpel, be ſtopt by the power of it in your walk.——The world will ſurely reckon you the greateſt ſtars that give the greateſt light: *Therefore let your light ſo ſhine before men, that others ſeeing your good works, may glorify God; even the works of Mercy and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace*, hand in hand together; and thus, for the ſake of the glory of God, the honour of Chriſt, and the credit of the goſpel, let the world know, that you have ſeen the glory, and felt the virtue of theſe perfections of God, harmoniouſly meeting and embracing each other in Chriſt. Here is your duty and work, believer, in the wilderneſs; and now in all your ſhortcomings therein, ſtill *look again to God's holy temple*, to Chriſt the meeting-place of theſe divine perfections. This is the mercy-ſeat, of which God ſays, Exod. xxv. 22. *There will I meet with thee, and commune with thee from between the cherubims:* and every new meeting with God there, will bring in new ſtrength, for all your work and warfare in time, till God and you meet together, and embrace one another, in glory through eternity.

And

And now, believer, I know you would desire, that others should share of the same happiness with you; and therefore, pray, that a short concluding word may be blessed with power, to thousands that hear me.—O ye that are by-standers and hearers only, in whatever corner of this house round about me, whether you be in my view or not, you are in God's view; and I have a word from him to you all: and as I have told you, what a terrible thing it is, to live and die in unbelief, with respect to this glorious device; so now I would tell you your duty, in this matter; and how you may share of the blessings and benefits in time, and for ever, that flow from this glorious meeting and embracement; and it is by kissing the Son of God, in whom all the attributes of God do kiss, and embrace each other; *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that trust in him*, Psal. ii. 12. Blessed are all they that kiss and embrace him. Would you then share of the grace and glory, that issue from this wonderful meeting, and ineffable embracement among the divine perfections, in Christ the Son of God? O then! come and kiss the Son: O down, down with carnal thoughts! carnal kissing, carousing, and cajolling; here, here is an object worthy of the most endeared embraces of the immortal soul.——O come! and *kiss the Son*, by believing in him, and applying the benefits of this glorious transaction, to yourself: and be who you will, if you kiss and embrace the Son, you shall find these glorious attributes of God, kissing and embracing you, and hugging you in their arms, as a darling of heaven, and a favourite in the house of God. Are the attributes of God, embracing one another in Christ? O flee in to their embraces, by fleeing in to Christ: *Say not, Christ is in heaven, how shall I embrace him? For the word is nigh, even in your mouth, and in your heart*, Rom. x. 8. *q. d.* So near is he in this word, that you may kiss him with your mouth, as it were, and embrace him in your heart: and to take in this word of grace, and Christ in it, is to embrace him. What do you say against Christ,

man, woman? Are you afraid, that Truth and Righteouſneſs conſpire againſt you, and hinder Mercy and Peace from ever meeting with you, and embracing you? O no: *Fear not;* only believe, *That Mercy and Truth are met together, and that Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other* in Chriſt. Truth will not ſtand in the way of Mercy; for they have kiſſed each other. He is indeed an infinitely juſt God, to take vengeance upon ſin: but juſtice will not hinder mercy from coming to you: only believe, that juſtice and mercy are reconciled in Chriſt, ſo as mercy can vent towards you, to the credit of juſtice. But, O! may ſuch a black-mouth'd ſinner as I, as black as hell and the devil, expect a kiſs of ſuch an infinitely fair Jeſus? Is that to be expected, that ſuch oppoſites ſhould meet in one another's arms? Yea, man, woman, allow me, a black ſinner like yourſelf, to be the happy meſſenger, to tell you in God's name, that be ye as black as you will, ſuch a meeting and embracing betwixt Chriſt and you, is more to be expected, than ever men or angels could have expected, that infinite juſtice and mercy ſhould have met together, and kiſſed each other in a God-man: and this unexpected meeting is the very ground, upon which your expectation of a meeting with, and embracement of God in Chriſt, is to be founded. O then, come and kiſs the Son: Why? but I cannot, ſay you: I think, I would gladly do it; but I cannot get near him, to kiſs and embrace him. Indeed this kindneſs muſt begin on his ſide; and therefore, O pray, that he would come, and meet you with a kiſs of infinite love. Say with the church, Song i. 2. *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth; for his love is better than wine.* If that be the language of your ſoul; O! I cannot embrace him; but my heart ſays, O let him come, and embrace me: and draw me out of the embracements of all my former lovers and luſts, that I may never kiſs any idol in the world again; but may live, and die in the arms, and embraces of the Son of God: Is that the language of your ſoul before the living God? Why, then the embracement betwixt Chriſt and you is begun, that

ſhall

ſhall never have an end; for it is a pledge, that he and you ſhall meet together in heaven, and embrace each other to eternity.

Now, though I hope, that this glorious meeting of divine perfections in Chriſt, hath put forth ſome virtue, to draw in ſome poor ſoul, to the match: yet I fear, that the moſt part are but ſtill as idle hearers and ſpectators, as if they were not concerned. But, O man, woman, young or old, unconcerned ſoul, be what you will, O yet, will you come, and ſee this great ſight? O come, and ſee the greateſt ſight, that ever was, or will be in heaven or earth, *A buſh burning, and not conſumed:* all the burning and ſhining attributes of God, meeting with infinite harmony, in the buſh of our nature; and yet, the buſh able *to bear the glory*, Zech. vi. 13. O come, and wonder! Here is the wonder of men and angels! For, this is a wonderful meeting to them. And the name of the meeting-place is juſtly called, WONDERFUL! O come, and partake; for the meeting is concerning your ſalvation, in Chriſt; *His delights were with the ſons of men.* O come, and ſing to the praiſe and glory of this wonderful harmonious embracement of divine perfections in Chriſt; eſpecially, you that partake; ſo as to ſee the glory, and feel the virtue thereof. O will you ſing with your hearts, and lips, and lives, ſaying, *Glory to God*, that his attributes have met together, and kiſſed each other in Chriſt; and that ever the like of me, got a kiſs by the bye? *Glory to God*, that there is no breaking of this meeting, nor parting of theſe embraces, by ſin, Satan, earth, or hell; but that they meet and embrace each other to eternity. And though you cannot mind to ſing all that hath been ſaid; yet I hope, the weakeſt memory may mind, to ſing the beſt note of all the ſermon, every day, ſaying, *Glory, glory, glory to God, that Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other.*

SERMON XXI, XXII.

CARNAL CONSULTATION *unfolded*; or, the *Great Evil* of being actuated, by *Carnal Principles*, in the Matters of God, *evinced*. *

GALATIANS i. 16.

—*Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*

WHEN I conſidered the great ſpring of all the motions and actions of the moſt of people, at this day; and what ſeems to be the grand counſellors, with whom they generally confer, I thought it was evident, from univerſal practice, that *fleſh and blood* are the great principle that influence the deportment and behaviour of the generation: And when I conſidered, that not only the *wicked world*, but even the *moſt eminent profeſſors* of religion, and the *truly godly* ſeem to diſcover, by their walk at this day, and their ſinful conformity at this day with the world, and compliance with the courſe of the times, their being led by motives from fleſh and blood: I ſay, when I conſidered theſe things, I thought the contrary practice and example of the great apoſtle would, at leaſt, be ſuitable for diſcovering the great evil of living under the conduct and influence of ſuch carnal principles: *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*

The falſe teachers, who preached up the ceremonial law, were doing all they could to leſſen Paul's reputa-

* We are not poſitively certain either when or where this Sermon was preached; but, from the place it hath in the Author's notes, and ſome paſſages and references in the diſcourſe itſelf, it appears to have been delivered in his own church at Dunfermline, ſometime towards the latter end of the year 1723. It has now been twice printed.

tion,

tion, who preached the pure goſpel of Chriſt to the Gentiles; and therefore, he is here ſetting himſelf to prove the divinity of his miſſion and doctrine, which he doth ſeveral ways in this chapter; particularly from verſ. 11, 12. He evidences it by the *manner* wherein he received the goſpel; that it was not by *information from men*, but by *revelation from God*, and immediate *inſpiration of Chriſt himſelf.* Here he puts them in mind.

1*ſt*, Of his *education*, ver. 13, 14.; that he had been not only a *rejecter* of Chriſtianity, but a *perſecutor* of it: this he doth, that they might be aſſured he was not led to this religion purely by education, ſince he had been bred up in enmity and oppoſition to it: and that it behoved to be ſomething extraordinary that had made ſuch a change upon him, and conquered the prejudices of his education: and brought him not only to *profeſs*, but to *preach* that doctrine which he had before ſo vehemently oppoſed.

2*dly*, He puts them in mind of his *converſion*, ver. 15, 16. which is here deſcribed four ways.

1. In the *author* of it, *viz.* GOD, the *efficient* cauſe; and the *pleaſure* of God, the *moving* cauſe: *It pleaſed God.* And this God is here deſcribed two ways.

(1.) He is deſcribed by his *ſeparating* grace; *He ſeparated me from my mother's womb.* The change that was wrought in Paul was in purſuance of a divine purpoſe concerning him, whereby he was appointed to be a believer and an apoſtle.

(2.) God is here deſcribed by his *calling* grace; *He called me by his grace.* Paul was called in an immediate way and manner: there was ſomething very peculiar, and extremely ſingular in his converſion.—See Acts ix. 1,—8.

2. Paul's converſion is deſcribed in the *manner* of it; *It pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me.* Chriſt was not only revealed externally *to* him, but alſo *in* him.

3. It is deſcribed in the *end* of it; *That I might preach him among the heathen.* Paul was both a Chriſtian and an Apoſtle by revelation.

4. His converſion is deſcribed in the *effect* in his carriage; *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*

From

From the words we might lay down and profecute ſeveral doctrinal obſervations; ſuch as,

(1.) That the MERCY of God is *preventing* mercy, towards all whom it takes hold upon; it prevents them; before ever they are born, they are ſeparate.

(2.) That none are CALLED upon the account of any *good work*, or *ſanctity*, or *blameleſſneſs* in themſelves; no: they are called of grace, and of the good pleaſure of God.

(3.) That the DOCTRINE of GRACE is the *revelation of Chriſt*: God, in the goſpel, reveals his Son *to* us; and, by his Spirit, reveals him in us, when he calls effectually.

(4.) That when the GOSPEL is revealed, it is *God* that doth it; *It pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me.*

(5.) That to preach the *Goſpel*, is to preach CHRIST; it is not a preaching of Moſes, but Chriſt.

(6.) That in matters of RELIGION, there ought to be no conſulting or conferring with *fleſh and blood.* Here the apoſtle tells us his own practice, that he did not conſult therewith; he did not conſult *man*, nor apply himſelf to any other for their advice and direction; neither, as in the following verſe, did he *go up to Jeruſalem, to thoſe who were apoſtles before him*, as if he needed to be approved by them, or receive any farther inſtructions or authority from them: ſo that it could not be pretended, that he was indebted to any other for his knowledge of the goſpel, or his authority to preach it; but it appeared, that both his *qualifications* for, and his *call* to the apoſtolic office were extraordinary and divine.

But although theſe obſervations are couched in the words, and natively deduced from them, yet I chooſe to confine myſelf to the conſideration of this text, as it may be taken more generally, and as bearing this propoſition, *viz.*

DOCT. *That in the matters of God, there ought to be no conſulting with fleſh and blood.* IMMEDIATELY I CONFERRED NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD.

In

In profecuting this ſubject, through ſupernatural aſſiſtance, we ſhall obſerve the following method and order.

I. We would explain what is to be underſtood by *fleſh* and *blood*; and not *conferring* with it.
II. We would confirm the *truth* of the doctrine by ſcripture examples.
III. Give the *reaſons* why we ought not to conſult with fleſh and blood.
IV. Make *application* of the whole ſubject, in ſeveral uſes.

I. We would *explain the doctrine*, by enquiring,
1. What we are to underſtand by *fleſh* and *blood*.
2. What it is not to *confer* with fleſh and blood.

1ſt. We are to enquire what is underſtood by *fleſh* and *blood*. In general, MAN, who is fleſh and blood, is here principally intended; men, whether good or bad: the apoſtle conſulted not with men, but gave himſelf up to God. More particularly, by fleſh and blood we may underſtand carnal eaſe, carnal reaſon, carnal friends, and carnal counſels of ſpiritual friends.

1. By fleſh and blood is meant *carnal eaſe* and *intereſt*. Maſter, ſpare thyſelf; what need all this toil and trouble? is the language of eaſy nature. Paul, being now converted, and ſo in a happy ſtate, having his ſalvation ſecured, carnal eaſe might ſay, What need you go and eſſay theſe travails, and encounter ſuch hardſhips, in propagating the goſpel of Chriſt, and ſpreading the knowledge of his name? Nay, but Paul, having got Chriſt *revealed in him*, he would not conſult with carnal eaſe: he would now *ſpend and be ſpent for Chriſt*.

2. By fleſh and blood is underſtood *carnal reaſon*. Paul was now divinely taught, as Peter was, of whom Chriſt ſays, *Fleſh and blood hath not revealed theſe things unto thee*: So Chriſt was revealed in Paul, not by *fleſh and blood*; that is, not by *carnal reaſon*, or *natural underſtanding*: and therefore he would not confer with fleſh

fleſh and blood. We ought not to conſult with carnal reaſon in the matters of religion.

3. By fleſh and blood is meant *carnal friends*: and and by theſe I underſtand not only *natural relations*, as father, mother, brother, and ſiſter, who, when loved and followed more than Chriſt, it is a conſulting with fleſh and blood; and *graceleſs relations*, with whom our conference and conſultation cannot but be a conferring with fleſh and blood; but alſo all *ungodly neighbours* and *acquaintances*, whether blood-relations or not: to conſult with them, or put any confidence in them is to conſult with fleſh and blood.

4. By fleſh and blood is meant even the *carnal counſels*, and *carnal arguments of ſpiritual friends*: for godly and pious friends may offer ungodly and impious counſels; ſuch as Peter to his maſter, when he would diſſuade him from going up to *Jeruſalem to ſuffer*: and Job's wife to her huſband, when ſhe ſaid to him, *Curſe God and die;* or, if it may be rendered, *Bleſs God and die*, it was an impious intention wherewith it was given. They that would not conſult with blood, muſt not reſt in the counſel of godly fleſh and friends, or truſt thereunto.

5. In a word, by fleſh and blood we may underſtand all *carnal confidence* whatſoever, whether from without or from within; in others, or in ourſelves: for, while we have any confidence in the fleſh, in our own or others natural wiſdom, righteouſneſs, or ſtrength, we ſo far conſult with fleſh and blood. But this leads me to conſider,

2*dly*, What is to be underſtood by not *conferring* with fleſh and blood. We ſhall lay down what we take to be the *import* thereof in the following particulars.

1. Not conferring with fleſh and blood, imports a *ſhunning* their company, in a manner. When we would not confer with a man, then we ſhun his company; we refuſe to converſe with him: ſo, when we confer not with fleſh and blood, we refuſe, in a manner, the company of ſuch ill gueſts. The man that confers not with fleſh and blood, in the matters of God, he lets in

to

to his company the wonderful Counſellor for his gueſt, to converſe withal; and ſhuts all carnal counſellors to the door. The man that will not confer with fleſh and blood, he avoids the ſalutations thereof, and ſhuns converſation therewith.

2. Not conferring with fleſh and blood, imports a not *giving ear* thereunto. When a perſon will not confer with one, if he cannot get his company altogether avoided, yet he will ſtop his ear, that he may not hear what he ſays: ſo, if fleſh and blood will be in to our company, not to confer therewith is to give a deaf ear to the ſuggeſtions of carnal reaſon, in the matters of God, and religion, and conſcience. Shut the door againſt all carnal counſel.

3. Not conferring with fleſh and blood, imports, not *taking their advice*, nor *regarding their ſolicitations*, but rejecting their motions. If fleſh and blood will be in with a word, and that we cannot get our ear ſtopt ſo faſt but that we muſt hear what it ſays; then, if it will be heard, yet it muſt not be regarded. It is vaſtly dangerous to hear, and much more to join with carnal counſellors, as Jacob of Simeon and Levi; *O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret; unto their aſſembly, mine honour, be not thou united*, Gen. xlix. 6.

4. Not conferring with fleſh and blood, imports, a not *following the dictates* thereof. It may be, that, through the prevalence of corruption, even in the godly, fleſh and blood, and carnal counſellors, are let in to their company; and, when once admitted, they are heard; and, when heard, they are too much regarded: but here, at leaſt, they are to ſtop; in regard they have gone too far; for, there wants nothing, in that caſe, but a putting the carnal counſel into execution: and therefore, they are to go back all the ſteps, by which they have gone forward, in this courſe; and to beware of walking in the counſel of fleſh and blood, or practiſing according to the advice thereof. If we *walk in the counſel of the ungodly*, we are in danger of *ſtanding in the way of ſinners*: if we *ſtand in the way of ſinners*, we are next in danger of *ſitting in the ſeat of the ſcornful*, as you have it, Pſal. i. 1. If

fleſh and blood will be in with its word, yet it muſt not be heard; if heard, yet it muſt not be regarded; if regarded, its advice muſt not be followed, otherwiſe we confer with fleſh and blood.

5. In a word, not to confer with fleſh and blood, is not only to *reject* conference and conſultation therewith, but to *receive other counſellors*, and *embrace better counſel* than fleſh and blood can give; and particularly, to conſult with the oracles of the living God, and follow the conduct of his word and Spirit.

II. We are next to *confirm the truth of the doctrine*, by a few ſcripture examples, that we are not to conſult with fleſh and blood, in the matters of God and conſcience. You may obſerve theſe four excellent examples in this matter.

1. To begin with the example of CHRIST, the great pattern of our imitation, in all his imitable perfections. When Peter came in with his carnal counſel, after Chriſt had been fortelling his death and ſufferings, Peter began, forſooth, to rebuke him, ſaying, *Be it far from thee, Lord; this ſhall not be unto thee*, Matthew xvi. 22. What! wilt thou ſuffer ſuch indignity? There was the language of fleſh and blood. But, how doth Chriſt entertain it? He turneth himſelf to Peter, ſaying, *Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me: for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men.*——So, when fleſh and blood comes in with its ſolicitations, we ought to baniſh the ſame with a *get thee behind me, Satan.*

2. We have the example of *Abraham*, when he *went out of his own country, at the commandment of God, not knowing whither he went*, Heb. xi. 8. and ſo not conſulting with fleſh and blood: yea, when God called him to offer up his ſon, his only ſon Iſaac, fleſh and blood might have objected a thouſand things: that he was the child of the promiſe: nay, that his offering Iſaac would contradict the *command* of God; *Thou ſhalt not kill*: And contradict the *promiſe* of God; *That in Iſaac ſhould his ſeed be called*: that it would contradict the rule of *natural affection*. Yea, but Abraham conſulted

ſulted not with fleſh and blood; but *by faith offered up Iſaac*, as it is ſaid, Heb. xi. 17. As little did he conſult with fleſh and blood, when he took God's word, and truſted in him, with relation to his having Iſaac, when both his body and Sarah's was dead.

3. We have the example of *Moſes*, of whom it is ſaid, Heb. xi. 24,——27. *By faith Moſes refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharoah's daughter; chooſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, &c. If he had conferred with fleſh and blood, he had rather choſen to dwell at eaſe in Pharoah's court, and enjoy all the pleaſures and treaſures thereof: but he had learned, not to confer with fleſh and blood.

4. We have the example of *Daniel*, chap. iii. 15, 16, 17. when commanded to worſhip Nebuchadnezzer's gold image: if Daniel had conſulted with fleſh and blood, he would eaſily have complied with the courſes of the times, and rather have worſhipped the golden image, than have been caſt into the fiery furnace: for, fleſh and blood would have told him, that it was better to be wiſe than too preciſe. Yea, but he and his companions could not be perſuaded to a little outward obedience; for, they conſulted not with fleſh and blood, but conſulted with God, ſaying, *We are not careful to anſwer thee, O king, in this matter: for, the God whom we ſerve is able to ſave us.* Yea, ſo far from conſulting with fleſh and blood was he and they, that they would not defile themſelves with a portion of the king's meat, Dan. i. 8.; nor with the wine which he drank. Fleſh and blood would have told him, that there was no harm in meat; that it was a thing indifferent: but they were under another influence and conduct, than that of fleſh and blood. Yea, ſo obſtinate was Daniel from conſulting with fleſh and blood, that notwithſtanding the conſpiracy of the nobles againſt him, becauſe of his devotion towards his God, and their obtaining a decree of caſting all into the lion's den that ſhould, for thirty days, worſhip any other, or aſk any petition of another, except of Darius, Daniel went more openly and worſhipped his God than

ever, in the view of his very enemies.——Fleſh and blood would have told him, that he might have diſpenſed with a little ceremony of opening windows, and expoſing him to danger that way; nay, but he conſulted not with fleſh and blood.

III. We now proceed to aſſign the *reaſons*, why we muſt not conſult with fleſh and blood. We ſhall only condeſcend on the four following.

1. Becauſe fleſh and blood are utterly *unable* to give advice, in the matters of God. Fleſh and blood could not ſo much as tell how a man might be *born again*; or regenerated, unleſs he ſhould go into his *mother's womb again*; as you ſee in the inſtance of Nicodemus, a learned man, a ruler of the Jews, and a maſter in Iſrael, John iii. 1,—4. Yea, when it was explained in part to him, it was impoſſible for fleſh and blood to underſtand it, as he himſelf confeſſed; *How can theſe things be?* John iii. 9. Fleſh and blood are altogether unable to give advice in the matters of God.

2. Becauſe fleſh and blood are *unwilling* to give advice in the matters of religion; for, they are in a conſtant rebellion againſt God and godlineſs; *The fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh; and theſe two are contrary the one to the other*, Gal. v. 17. Yea, fleſh and blood are enmity againſt God: *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: and is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: ſo then they that are after the fleſh cannot pleaſe God*, Rom. viii. 7, 8. Hence,

3. Becauſe fleſh and blood are *unfit* for giving advice in the matters of God, and conſcience, and religion; if they be unable and unwilling, ſurely they are unfit to be conſulted with. It is a folly to conſult with them; for, their counſel is like that of Ahithophel, that will be *turned to fooliſhneſs*. Fleſh and blood will be ſure to give us wrong advice, and bad counſel in the matters of God. Is it fit, in the matters of God, to conſult the enemies of God? No; for, *What fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? And*

what

what communion hath light with darkneſs? What concord hath Chriſt with Belial? Or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16.—— Again,

4. Becauſe it is *dangerous* to conſult with fleſh and blood. It is very dangerous, in ſeveral reſpects; particularly in the four following ones.

(1.) It is dangerous, becauſe fleſh and blood will hinder us from duty, if we confer with them. What hindered thoſe that were bidden to the goſpel-feaſt? Why, one conſulted with his *farm*, another with his *merchandiſe;* and ſo they made *light of the invitation*, by conſulting with fleſh and blood, and adviſing with carnal reaſon, and carnal eaſe, Matth. xxii. 5. What hindered the rulers that believed in Chriſt from confeſſing him? John xii. 42, 43. Even fear, *leſt they ſhould be put out of the ſynagogue;* for, *they loved the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God.* They conſulted with fleſh and blood.

(2.) It is dangerous, becauſe if we conſult with fleſh and blood, it will not only hinder us from entering upon a profeſſion of Chriſt, and ſo lead us to the omiſſion of duty, but alſo will make us *venture* upon thoſe things, which God hath expreſly diſcharged, and commanded that we ſhould not do: ſo Saul, when he went to deſtroy the Amalekites, he had an expreſs command to ſpare nothing, 1 Sam. xv. 3. But Saul conſulted with fleſh and blood; *he ſpared Agag*, and *ſome of the beſt of the cattle.* Why might fleſh and blood ſay to Saul, O? I may be in the like caſe; and he that ſhews no mercy, ſhall have no mercy ſhewn him; ſo he ſpared him. And he alſo conſulted with fleſh and blood concerning the cattle, and ſheep, and oxen: carnal reaſon told him, they would ſerve for *burnt-offerings*, ver. 15. But Samuel told Saul afterwards, That *obedience was better than ſacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams*, ver. 22. It was conſulting with fleſh and blood that cauſed Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit: ſhe ſaw it was fair to the eye, and meat to be deſired, Gen. iii. 6.

(3.) It

(3.) It is dangerous, becauſe if we conſult with fleſh and blood, it will hinder us from *ſuffering*, in the cauſe of God. The apoſtles rejoiced in this, that *they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for his name*, Acts v. 41.; they counted it a great honour: it is a gift of God when it is given, not only to believe, but to ſuffer for his name. Had Paul conſulted with fleſh and blood, he would never have been willing to die for Chriſt's ſake, as Acts xxi. 11, 13. *What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? I am ready, not only to be bound, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus.* Fleſh and blood, inſtead of ſuffering for Chriſt, will tell a man to perſecute the cauſe of Chriſt, and the followers of Chriſt, againſt knowledge and conſcience, if he conſult his own carnal eaſe, intereſt, credit, and honour in the world.

(4.) It is dangerous, becauſe if we conſult with fleſh and blood, it ſends a man at laſt to conſult with the *devil*, and to take advice of hell, as you ſee in the caſe of Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. *Seek me a woman that hath a familiar ſpirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her.* Thus he conſulted with the witch of Endor. Having ſo long conſulted with fleſh and blood, he at laſt ſought to the devil himſelf to conſult with. If we ſtill conſult with fleſh and blood, who are the devil's friends and favourites, we are in danger of conſulting next with the devil himſelf.

IV. We come now to the *application* of the ſubject, which we ſhall eſſay in an uſe of information, caution, reprehenſion, dehortation, and direction.

1*ſt*, Let us then improve the doctrine, in an uſe of *information*. Hence we may ſee,

1. What *advice* it is that the *wicked of the world* do follow, and what is the counſel that doth deſtroy them, and miſlead them: why, they are wholly under the conduct and counſel of *fleſh and blood*; they have a daily conference ſtated with carnal eaſe, carnal reaſon: and the conference is held in the heart; and at this council Satan preſides; *he works in the children of diſobedience*. And what can be expected as the reſult of ſuch

ſuch a black and helliſh conſultation? For, at this council, iniquity is eſtabliſhed by a law; and no acts paſſed, but acts of rebellion and hoſtility againſt heaven. Indeed, the wicked world liſten to no ſolicitations, no arguments, but what are drawn from fleſh and blood: and hence, in a ſuitableneſs to the dictates of the carnal inclination, ſome are hotly purſuing their pleaſures ſome their profits, ſome their honour: the voluptuous man, his pleaſure, his cups, and quéens; the covetous man, his profit, his worldly gains; the ambitious man, his honour, his credit and grandeur.—Whence is it that all manner of wickedneſs, profanity, and carnality abound! Why, the world are all buſy conferring with fleſh and blood: this is the principle that ſways them; hence ſo wearied, in duty, ſecret, private, and public.

2. See wherein it is, that the *immortal ſoul*, and its everlaſting concerns, are ſo much ſlighted and neglected by the world, while the body, and outward things, draw away all the concern after them, why, it is becauſe men conſult with *fleſh and blood;* they conſult their carnal eaſe and outward conveniency; but do not conſult their ſoul's everlaſting welfare. Fleſh and blood goes no higher than itſelf, and takes no notice of the ſoul; or, if it doth, it provides no better for the ſoul than for the body, like the fool in the goſpel, who thought his ſoul might be happy with full barns; ——*Soul, take thy reſt, thou haſt goods laid up for many years.* Alas! ſhort-lived happineſs for an immortal ſoul; *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee.*

3. Hence ſee the root of *ſuperſtition* and *will-worſhip*, it flows from conferring with fleſh and blood; which hating the ſpirituality of worſhip, is moſt taken up with carnal ordinances and human inventions, and uninſtituted ceremonies: *In vain do they worſhip me, teaching for the doctrines the commandments of men.* It is too remarkable, that the more carnal that the generation is growing, the more is abjured ceremonies creeping in among us, and the leſs teſtifying againſt the ſame; though yet it be a *burden which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear*, as the apoſtle ſays,

Acts

Acts xv. 10. *why tempt ye God to put a yoke?* The apoſtle there ſpeaks of a yoke of *ceremonies*, once enjoined of God himſelf, that now being aboliſhed, it was a tempting of God; much more is the yoke of ceremonies that never were enjoined. But while we conſult with fleſh and blood, we tamely ſubmit to the yoke of *carnal ordinances*, as they are called, Heb. ix. 10.; and while the ſpirituality of worſhip is neglected and deteſted, and the internal glory of ordinances is out of ſight.

4. See what is the *ſpring of all corruption* in the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government of the houſe of God: it will be found that conſulting with fleſh and blood, in the matters of religion, is at the bottom thereof.

(1.) Whence is it that the *doctrines* of the goſpel have been ſo much corrupted? It is juſt from carnal reaſon, and conſulting with that rather than with the word; *We err, not knowing the ſcriptures*, not conferring with the ſcriptures: or, if men confer with the ſcriptures, and conſult the word, it is not with the *word* and the *Spirit* together; but it is with the word and their own ſpirit, their own carnal ſentiments:—hence ſo many carnal interpretations of the ſcripture, and carnal gloſſes upon the word, ſuiting the natural apprehenſions of men concerning the *law*, as if it was ſtill ſtanding in force, as a covenant, againſt believers as well as unbelievers; or, as if perſonal obedience thereto were the way to eternal life, while yet the ſcripture teſtifies of Chriſt, as the *only way* to life; and our obedience now, when evangelical, as being only the neceſſary fruit and evidence of union to him. Pride of reaſon, founds Socinianiſm; pride of the will, Arminianiſm; pride of ſelf-righteouſneſs, Neonomianiſm.——How is the doctrine of *juſtification* and *ſanctification* confounded *, by mens conferring with fleſh and blood? Carnal reaſon ſuggeſting, that God will not juſtify us, but upon ſome worthy conſideration,

* The difference between juſtification and ſanctification, is clearly ſtated by our Author. See the page in the beginning of Vol. II.

or

or valuable performance of ours, which intimates groſs ignorance of the goſpel, concerning free juſtification by the blood of Chriſt.—It is from this root, even the conferring with fleſh and blood, that many alſo do abuſe the doctrine of the goſpel to *licentiouſneſs*, as if it encouraged wickedneſs, which is blaſphemy againſt Chriſt, as if he was the miniſter of ſin: nay, thoſe that reproachfully charge the *doctrine of grace*, as a *covert to ſin;* and the *preachers* of it, as if they were *enemies to holineſs*, do but groſly betray their ignorance of the goſpel, and their conſulting with fleſh and blood, in all their carnal arguments; for, if they conſult with the goſpel itſelf duly, in oppoſition to legal doctrine, they would find, that the more evangelical the doctrine is, the more holy and pure it is and influential upon holineſs; for, the more a man is *dead to the law*, the more he *lives unto God:* but this will remain a myſtery to many in the world for ever, becauſe of their carnal thoughts and reaſonings in favours of the law, as a covenant; for fleſh and blood cannot endure goſpel-doctrine; nature and carnal reaſon cannot make the law a rule of obedience, without making it a rule of acceptance *.

(2.) Whence is it that the *worſhip* which God hath appointed in his houſe, is ſo much abuſed; What is the riſe of all that deteſtable neutrality in the worſhip of God, and wearineſs and lukewarmneſs in the duties thereof? Why, it is juſt mens conferring with fleſh and blood. Spiritual worſhip, and a carnal heart, cannot comport, ſuit, or agree together: *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh.* And fleſh and blood cannot endure ſpiritual work and worſhip: hence *men draw near to God with the mouth, while the heart is removed far from him.* Hence men are careleſs what way they worſhip, or what way others worſhip God; whether it be an idolatrous, ſuperſtitious, or inſtituted way, like Gallio, *they care for none of thoſe things.* Hence

* The Reader will find theſe topics hand'ed to excellent purpoſe by our Author, in Vol. II. Sermon XXIII. intitled, *Law-death, and Goſpel-life.*

ſabbaths and ſermons, are a wearineſs; praying and praiſing, are a burden: fleſh and blood cannot endure theſe things, "Take a carnal man, ſays one, tye "him to a poſt, and you may kill him with praying "and preaching."

(3.) Whence is it that partiality in the exerciſe of *church diſcipline*, doth proceed? When men do not confer with fleſh and blood, then diſcipline is powerful and impartial: but when, by conſulting with fleſh and blood, they connive at ſin, over-look it in ſome, and dare not reprove it in others.——Fleſh and blood ſays, Such a perſon is a *friend;* we muſt favour him: ſuch a perſon is a *great man*, a rich man; we muſt wink at a fault; we muſt not meddle with him, leſt he make us and the church uneaſy.——By theſe carnal reaſonings, the power of diſcipline is broken. Alas! how far are we, at this day, from the ſpirit of Ambroſe, who excommunicated the emperor of Theodoſius, for ſome raſh orders of his; while the emperor humbly ſubmitted to the diſcipline of the church; and, upon his repentance was received? But now, alas! we muſt not offend this and that great man, otherwiſe all will go wrong. Oh! where is powerful and impartial diſcipline! It is ſunk in the mire of ſinful conference with fleſh and blood.

(4.) Whence again proceeds that diſorder and confuſion that takes place in the *government* of the church? While men conſult not with fleſh and blood, the government is beautiful and orderly: but by carnal reaſoning, and carnal policy, and carnal wiſdom, it is turned out of courſe: tyranny in church government over the ſouls and conſciences of people; ſuch as, in thruſting paſtors upon a Chriſtian flock, without their free conſent and election, is rooted in conferring with fleſh and blood: Why, ſays carnal wiſdom and policy, ſuch a patron muſt be gratified; ſuch a great man muſt be pleaſed; the church cannot ſtand without the ſupport of ſuch pillars *. What is all this, but a conferring with

* That patronage is a great grievance in the church, contrary to the ſcripture, and repugnant to the acts of the church in her beſt times,

with fleſh and blood.——In a word, all the degeneracy of our day, is owing to this origin.

5. Hence ſee what is the root of all the *diviſions* of our day, it flows from this conſultation with fleſh and blood. See James iv. 1. 1 Cor. iii. 3. *Whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſion; are ye not carnal?* Diviſion among miniſters and people flows from this carnal biaſs; proud fleſh and blood cannot be controlled, ſcorns to be corrected: *Who ſhall be greateſt?* is ſtill the queſtion of fleſh and blood. Who ſhall be higheſt? Proud fleſh and blood will put a fair face upon the fouleſt act, rather than take with a fault, or confeſs a wrong, or forgive an injury.

6. Hence ſee what it is, that the people of God hath to *wreſtle* againſt, while here, even all the counſels of fleſh and blood. Paul rejects the conſultation: there he plainly ſuppoſes that fleſh and blood was ready to ſuggeſt, and ſolicite, and give their advice; but Paul rejects the ſame; *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.* This is a council where Satan preſides, and is always at the head of the table. And hence, while they have *fleſh and blood* to wreſtle againſt, they have *principalities and powers* alſo, Eph. vi. 12. Much need have they of the *whole armour of God, that they may be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil.*

2*dly*, This doctrine may be improven for *caution* to prevent miſtakes. There are ſeveral things that this duty, of not conſulting with fleſh and blood, doth not prohibite: ſuch as,

1. It doth not exclude the duty of neceſſary *converſation*, *traffic*, and *merchandiſe* with the carnal men of this world, providing we do not mingle with their vice, and contract no intimate friendſhip with them; for, *The friendſhip of this world is enmity againſt God:* but otherwiſe, converſation, company, trade, and traf-

times, may be ſeen evinced, Vol. V. Serm. LXXXII, intitled. *The Law of the Houſe*; Serm. LXXXIII. intitled, *The Church beſieged*; and Serm. LXXXV. intitled, *The Stability of Faith.* In notes at the foot of the page.

fic with ſuch may be neceſſary and allowable. This caution the apoſtle gives us, 1 Cor. v. 9, 10. *I wrote unto you in an epiſtle, not to keep company with fornicators. Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then muſt ye needs go out of the world.*

2. It doth not exclude, impeach, or debar the duty of *charity toward the poor*, and *honouring the Lord with our worldly ſubſtance*, providing it be not done out of oſtentation, to be *ſeen of men*, and to gratify fleſh and blood. And as it doth not exclude charitable *deeds*, toward the ſouls and bodies of all men, doing them all the good ſervices we can; ſo neither doth it exclude charitable *thoughts* of them: *Charity thinketh no evil*, but puts the beſt conſtruction upon all the actions of others, that the nature of the thing will bear, 1 Cor. xv. 12.

3. It doth not exclude or debar the duty of *ſpiritual prudence*. We are to be *wiſe as ſerpents*, and not to run upon ſeen hazard, without a call; nor to neglect the duty of conſulting our neceſſary ſafety and ſecurity in time of danger and perſecution; providing we do not fly when God bids us ſtand; or when the cauſe of Chriſt, or glory of God, oblige us to bear witneſs for him, and for his truth: but abſtract from theſe, or the like caſes, Chriſtian prudence is requiſite in ſhunning whatever hazard we may, through imprudence, caſt ourſelves into: hence ſaith Solomon, *The prudent man foreſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf.*

4. It doth not exclude or impeach the duty of *courteſy* and *civility* towards all men; no: religion doth not allow men to be ill-bred or any way uncivil, more than it allows them to be ill-natured toward any: ſo, to *be courteous*, as the apoſtle exhorts, 1 Pet. iii. 8. is not to be reckoned a conferring with fleſh and blood. There is a way of *becoming all things to all men*, by the duty of courteſy, civility, and hoſpitality, which may be gaining to all.

5. It doth not exclude the duty of *frugality* and *induſtry* about our worldly concerns. One is not reckoned a conſulter with fleſh and blood, becauſe he provides for his family; for, he that doth not ſo, ſaith the apoſtle,

apoſtle, hath *denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel.* One may be a Mary for piety, and a Martha for induſtry too; providing it be managed with moderation, ſo as not to exclude *the better part.*

6. It doth not exclude the duty of *mercy, pity* and *compaſſion* towards the *body*, whether our own, or that of others. It were an abuſe of this doctrine, if any, out of a pretence of not conſulting with fleſh and blood, ſhould ſhew no mercy to the outward man, no regard to their own health: but ſhould puniſh the body with immoderate faſting, or pennance, or unmercifully macerate their fleſh, as many in the popiſh church, through their ſuperſtitious devotion, do. But, in ſome caſes, *mercy is better than ſacrifice.*

7. It doth not exclude or debar the duty of *forbearance* and *tenderneſs* towards thoſe, that are overtaken in a fault. It were an abuſe of this doctrine, of not conſulting with fleſh and blood, to be thereupon untender of weaklings, who are ready to ſtumble and fall: for, though this doctrine obligeth us not to bear with ſin, where-ever it is, yet it doth not allow us to inſult over the infirmities of any; but we are to take the apoſtle's rule, Gal. vi. 1, 3. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs; conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt.*

8. It doth not exclude the duty of *reſpect* to every one, in their ſeveral ſtations and relations; particularly, due regard to parents, magiſtrates, and miniſters; and ſubjection to judicatories of God's appointment, providing it be *in the Lord*, and *in all things lawful*, is not inconſiſtent with this duty, of not conferring with fleſh and blood: nay, it is highly conſiſtent therewith; yea, and neceſſary thereunto: for a man may conſult with fleſh and blood, by refuſing to give due ſubjection; as many obſtinate offenders do, that deſpiſe all diſcipline. Though, indeed, unlawful ſubjection or obedience, *not in the Lord*, is but a conſulting with fleſh and blood; while we follow the dictates

of

of courts or councils, in a way disagreeable to the word of God.

9. If doth not exclude the duty of *advising with neighbours* and *Christians*, whether about civil or religious matters, wherein any difficulty doth present itself. The doctrine, indeed, excludes the taking of *ill* counsel; but doth not exclude the taking of *good* counsel from man, in an agreeableness to the word of God: nay, many times *in the multitude of counsellors there is safety*, as Solomon saith; who also teacheth us to take advice in matters of weight, saying, *With good advice make war.*

10. If we view this doctrine, of not consulting with flesh and blood, as it stands in opposition to self-righteousness; or seeking to establish our own credit before men, or our own righteousness before God; yet it doth not exclude the duty of desiring and seeking, in a regular way, to have and maintain a *good name:* studying to have a righteousness of profession before men; and a righteousness of sanctification, both of heart and life, before God. Though we are to deny the righteousness of works, and to seek justification and acceptance elsewhere, otherwise we are of those that *put confidence in the flesh*, and are not *the true circumcision*: yet we are not to *forsake the works of righteousness*, but to *maintain good works: This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works: these things are good and profitable unto men.* They are to be maintained before men, in all the duties of righteousness, respecting them; and sobriety, respecting ourselves, and our deportment before them: they are to be maintained before God, in all the parts of holiness; and that both internal, in the exercise of holy graces; and external, in the performance of holy duties. Though we must *deny* this righteousness, in point of *dependence;* yet not in point of *performance:* though we need another righteousness to *trust* to, yet we need this to be *possest* of; otherwise we would expose the faith of Christ to be evil spoken of. By our *light shining before men*

men, we muſt endeavour to make others *confeſs*, that we are illuminate with the beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs.———A righteouſneſs without us we need, to give us a *title* to heaven; and a righteouſneſs within us, for ſanctification of heart and way, we need, to give us a *meetneſs* for heaven. A right of *merit* we have in juſtification, by Chriſt's righteouſneſs; a right of *meetneſs* we have in ſanctification, by Chriſt's Spirit: which latter right may be the meaning of that word, Rev. xxii. 14. *Bleſſed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city:* Or, it may be underſtood thus, that they may have *evidence* of their right, according to that word, John xv. 14. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you.*

The *third* uſe is of *reprehenſion.* This doctrine reproves many ſorts of people, that may be ſaid to confer with fleſh and blood: and here, by the bye, you may examine whether or not you be chargeable with this ſin, of conferring with fleſh and blood: and if we ſearch narrowly, I know few or none will be in caſe to exculpate themſelves, or plead, Not guilty. There are thoſe ſeven or eight ſorts of people, that conſult with fleſh and blood.

The *firſt* ſort of perſons, that confer with fleſh and blood, are thoſe, who, not chuſing the word of God for their rule, nor his Spirit for their guide, conſult with *tradition*; yielding themſelves to be ruled and conducted with human tradition, and antient cuſtoms of their forefathers: This Paul acknowledges was his ſin, before Chriſt was here revealed in him, ver. 14. *Being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.*—This is the ſin of the *Papiſts*, who reject the ſcriptures, as ſufficient to uphold their religion; no wonder, for it cannot ſtand upon that foundation; and therefore they build upon corrupt traditions, and ſtudy to uphold the ſame with fire and faggot.—Yea, this is the ſin of ignorant *Proteſtants*, that ſhape their religion only in a con-

conformity to their anceſtors; they will be of their forefathers religion, and maintain the principles of their education, like thoſe, Jer. xliv. 17. What is all this but a conſulting with fleſh and blood?

The *ſecond* ſort of perſons, that confer with fleſh and blood, are thoſe that conſult with *man* in the matters of God; and that either in point of truſt or fear.—Some conſult with man in point of *truſt*, while they put their truſt in man, contrary to the command of God, Pſal. cxlvi. 3. *Put not your truſt in princes, nor in the ſons of men, in whom there is no help.* It is dangerous to repoſe our truſt in man: *Curſed is man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, whoſe heart departeth from the Lord*, Jer. xvii. 5. If we truſt in armies or allies, parliaments or potentates, friends or favourites, we truſt in lying words: *It is better to truſt in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes*, Pſal. cxviii. 9. *Truſt ye not in a friend, put no confidence in a guide*, Micah vii. 5. And Jer. ix. 4. *Take ye heed, every one of his neighbour, and truſt ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly ſupplant, and every neighbour will walk with ſlanders.*—That time is come to paſs: there is the ordinary character of the men that are the object of our falſe confidence, when we truſt in men like ourſelves: yea, *the beſt of men are like a briar*, ſaith the prophet Micah; *and the moſt upright ſharper than a thorn hedge, which will pierce all that lean to it.* If we depend upon human powers, for the preſervation of our church or ſtate; or depend upon human policy, for the reformation of religion, we will find ourſelves ſadly diſappointed: *It is better to truſt in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes.* If we depend upon human laws, even for the ſecurity of our fortune; or upon our compliance with whatever human authority enjoins, for our freedom from outward troubles and trials, we truſt but in man, and ſo confer with fleſh and blood.—Again, ſome conſult with man in point of *fear*: If either we truſt in them, or be *afraid of man that ſhall die*, we conſult with fleſh and blood. It is an awful word to this purpoſe, Iſa. li. 12, 13. *Who art thou that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of a man, that ſhall die; and of the ſon of man, which ſhall*

ſhall be made as graſs? and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker, that hath ſtretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth? Thus many dare not do their duty for fear of man: they dare not worſhip God in their families; they dare not abſtain from ſwearing, drinking, tippling, or betake themſelves to ſerious religion, for fear of being ſcoffed, and ſcorned, and perſecuted; like the Jews, John xii. 42. that *durſt not profeſs Chriſt, for fear of being caſt out of the ſynagogue.* Thus ſome even of the godly, perhaps, dare not make public appearances for the cauſe and truths of the Lord Jeſus, for fear of being expoſed to the cenſures of the church, in a time when they are called to appear: but ſee what the Lord ſaith, in ſuch a caſe, to thoſe that fear the reproaches, and revilings of men: *Hearken unto me, ye that know righteouſneſs, the people in whoſe heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings: For the moth ſhall eat them up like a garment, and the worm ſhall eat them like wool.* It is but the graſs of the field that oppoſeth us; *All fleſh is graſs.*——Let us not conſult with fleſh and blood.

The *third* ſort of perſons, that confer with fleſh and blood, are theſe who conſult with *paſſion* and *reſentment*, ſo as to ſeek revenge upon every injury, real or conceived. Why, aſk a man why he is ſo hot in the purſuit of revenge, againſt thoſe that have wronged him: he will anſwer, How can fleſh and blood bear this? If I put up with this wrong, they will wrong me again; therefore, nothing will ſerve me but their blood, or ſome ſuitable retaliation, for the injury done me: while yet we are commanded to *pray for them that perſecute us*, and to *love them that hate us.* If we conſult with fleſh and blood, we will *devour one another*, Gal. v. 15. How often hath it happened, that thoſe who have ſought revenge have been the deſtruction of themſelves and others, while both parties have been killed in the field; and while others, meditating revenge, they and their whole families have been undone by law-pleas: yea, many times conſulting with fleſh and blood, in matters of revenge, cauſeth men

be their own deſtruction. Saul killed himſelf, after he had long hunted David. And Judas, who was ſo cruel to his Maſter, ſold himſelf to a halter, hanged himſelf, and his bowels guſhed out. Proud fleſh and blood is the cauſe of revenge; *Only by pride cometh contention*, Proverbs xiii. 10. whereas humility would keep peace. Pliny writes of two ill-natured goats, that met both together, upon a narrow bridge, over a great ſtream: the bridge was ſo narrow, that the one could not paſs by the other; and if they had ſtriven, and fought it out, it had been preſent danger of drowning to them both: but at laſt one of them lying down, and becoming a bridge to the other, both were ſaved. Indeed, the example of that brute beaſt may tell us, it is better, to let perſons trample upon us ſometimes, than by ſquabbling and diſcord, to endanger the drowning and deſtroying of both ourſelves and others. A man, meditating revenge, cannot go to God and ſay, as Chriſt hath taught him, *Forgive us our ſins, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.* If you ſay this petition with a heart full of revenge, you do nothing but imprecate a curſe upon yourſelves; and that God would deal with you, as you deal with your brother: if you pray not, then God's vengeance is ready to be poured out, Jer. x. 25.; if you do pray, then your prayer is a cart-rope, to pull down vengeance upon you. Why, ſay you, but ſhould my neighbour abuſe me at this rate? No, indeed: but becauſe he hath broken one command, in wronging you, will you break another, in malicious revenge againſt him?—Why put this laſt queſtion? That is doctrine for them that have no blood in their nails: I tell you miniſter, fleſh and blood cannot endure the wrong I ſuſtain. I tell you man, fleſh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God: wherefore, if you come there, fleſh and blood muſt be mortified, and not conſulted with. Why, I would be juſt reckoned a fool, a ſot, an idiot, if I ſhould put up with ſuch an affront; it would be a diſcredit. Why, the wiſdom of God, by the mouth of Solomon, ſaith, *It is the glory of a man to paſs by an injury.* And what ſaith your carnal wiſdom, poor fool that

that you are, in oppoſition to God's wiſdom? Let the world judge as they pleaſe, it is a greater credit for a man to overcome himſelf, and his revengeful affections, than to overcome his enemies, either at the bar or in the field. Well, ſay you, I ſhall forgive, but I cannot forget. Indeed, it is a wonder what one remarks in Cyprian, that though he had an excellent memory for all things elſe, yet he could never remember an injury; ſo ill was his memory on that ſcore, which was his excellency. But we may obſerve as great a wonder, on the contrary, that men have ſuch ill memories, that they forget all things elſe almoſt; yet they have ſuch good memories that they will remember injuries never ſo long: yea, they will never forget them, but mind to reſent and revenge them, after many years. Aſk many a perſon concerning a ſermon: Alas! I have the worſt memory in the world, I am ſo forgetful; I would give any thing for a good memory: and yet, perhaps, they will mind an injury twenty years. Oh! if God ſo forgive our ſins, as yet not to forget them, what would become of us!

The *fourth* ſort, who confer with fleſh and blood, are thoſe that conſult with *numbers* and *multitudes*, in the matters of God: they will be the religion that the moſt are of; they will follow ſuch a principle and opinion, becauſe the greateſt multitude and number of great men, or good men do ſo: thus, like Roman votaries, they bind their faith to the belt of the church; to believe as the church believes. It is not, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, that binds them; that were to build upon a divine teſtimony: but, *Thus ſaith the church*, or thus ſaith an aſſembly of divines, or thus ſaith ſuch and ſuch a great number of men: the greateſt multitude of the learned and eminent ſay ſo and ſo; therefore we follow theſe. Thus they take the goſpel upon truſt, and have the faith of Chriſt with reſpect of perſons. Can ſuch a great number be all wrong, and ſuch a ſmall number only right? No; wiſdom muſt dwell with the greateſt multitude, ſaith fleſh and blood, without ever *proving all things*, and *holding faſt that which is good*: or, like the

noble Bereans, *ſearching the ſcriptures, to ſee whether theſe things be ſo.* Perhaps this is as prevailing an evil, as any in the preſent time, with reſpect to matters controverted in the Lord's houſe. It is a carnal argument for one to ſay, Lord help us, if all others be in the wrong but you; yet, why muſt we be ſingular? Yea, but when vice becomes general, ſingularity becomes a virtue: when error in judgment, or principle, becomes univerſal, ſingularity becomes a neceſſary duty. What though we be called nice, and proud, and ſingular, affecting a name above others? We muſt *follow Chriſt, bearing his reproach.* Though a man ſhould happen to be on the right ſide of the queſtion, by following the principles of thoſe whom he takes to be the greateſt multitude of learned and eminent men; yet his faith is but an human faith, while it is built but upon an human teſtimony; and a man's embracing only what he thinks the Rabbies of the day maintain, is too like that of the Phariſees, John vii. 48, 49. *Have any of the rulers and Phariſees believed in him? But this people, that know not the law, are accurſed.* Even ſo will fleſh and blood argue: The greateſt body and number of the great and learned world, if not the whole tribe of thoſe that are reckoned wiſe and learned, believe ſo and ſo; and it is to be ſuppoſed that it is but a pack of ignorant fools, that differ from them; and therefore we will believe as the greateſt multitude of our church guides direct us; they know things of that nature better than we; and therefore we muſt truſt that they are in the right; thus many times the *blind lead the blind, and both fall into the ditch:* for it may happen, that even thoſe may be blind, whom neither themſelves, nor others think to be ſo; ſo it was with the opinionative Phariſees, who ſaid, *Are we blind alſo?* John ix. 40.

The *fifth* ſort that confer with fleſh and blood, are thoſe who conſult with *human wiſdom*, in the matters of God, and *whoſe fear towards God is taught by the wiſdom of men;* on which account the Lord threatens, Iſa. xxix. 14. *The wiſdom of their wiſe men ſhall periſh; and the underſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid.*

Many

Many are taken not with the *truth*, as it is in Jeſus, but with the wiſdom of fine words, or the wiſdom of human literature, and carnal reaſonings; both which the apoſtle cautions againſt, in the matters of religion; *And this I ſay, leſt any man ſhould beguile you with enticing words*, Col. ii. 4. And the apoſtle's practice was the very reverſe of this, 1 Corinth ii. 1, 2. *Brethren, when I came to you, I came not with excellency of ſpeech, or of wiſdom, declaring unto you the teſtimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified. Inticing words* is the bait wherewith the credulous and ſimple ſort of people are taken, as the apoſtle obſerves, Rom. xvi. 17, 18. The *ſimple* are they who are caught with the bait of the *inticing words of men*, who, like merchants, ſet off ſlight and corrupt wares with the fineſt words. Another caution is, Coloſ. ii. 8. *Beware leſt any man ſpoil you through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Chriſt.* The former is a bait for the ſimple, but here is a bait for the learned world, when human philoſophy and natural reaſonings, are ſet in oppoſition to the truth as it is in Jeſus Chriſt.——People confer with fleſh and blood, when they are offended at the *ſimplicity* of Chriſt's doctrine, which is a ſtranger to the ornament of human wiſdom, clothed only with the ſimple attire of a vulgar ſtile, free from the flouriſh of lofty eloquence: thus Auguſtine, before his converſion, owns his contempt of the word, when he began to read it, becauſe he looked upon the ſtile of the ſcriptures as very mean, compared with the eloquence of of Cicero, to which he had accuſtomed himſelf: hence it is ſaid, *The Jews require a ſign, and the Greeks ſeek after wiſdom;* i. e. The *Jews*, who were accuſtomed to live under extraordinary diſpenſations, they would have nothing but miracles and prodigies from heaven; but the Greeks, the Gentiles, they ſought for the depth of philoſophy in the goſpel; and when they miſſed that, they laughed it to ſcorn; as you may ſee in Paul's rencounter with the Epicurean philoſophers and Stoics, Acts xvii. 18. Great reaſon then had the apoſtle to

ſay

ſay as he doth, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 6, 7. *And my ſpeech, and my preaching was not with inticing words of man's wiſdom, but in demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power. Howbeit, we ſpeak wiſdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wiſdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought. But we ſpeak the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory.* Therefore, though *the preaching of the goſpel be, to them that periſh, fooliſhneſs; yet to them that are ſaved, it is the power of God: For God hath made fooliſh the wiſdom of this world; and by the fooliſhneſs of preaching ſaveth them that believe. We preach Chriſt crucified; to the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs; but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt the power of God, and the wiſdom of God: becauſe the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men, and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger than men;* ſo you ſee the apoſtle ſpeaking at large, 1 Cor. i. 17,—29. Theſe that are only taken then, with a fine ſtile of language, and turns of wit, and the flowers of rhetoric, without ſearching into the myſteries of the goſpel, and ſeeking to have the goſpel coming, not in *word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Theſſ. i. 5. are carnal, and conferring with fleſh and blood.——But carnal wiſdom, and carnal reaſon runs ſome times in another channel, while it not only, upon the one hand, repreſents the *doctrine* of the goſpel as too mean, and therefore deſpiſes it; but, on the other hand, repreſents the *myſteries* of the goſpel, as too high, and therefore diſcredits it. Thus the devil plays his game at both hands: ſometimes ſuggeſting that the doctrine of the goſpel is too coarſe and plain; at other times that it is too ſublime and myſterious; ſuch as, the myſtery of the Trinity, the myſtery of the incarnation of Chriſt, the myſtery of the ſpiritual union between Chriſt and the believer, the myſtery of free juſtification, without works, by the righteouſneſs of another.——Hence a generation of atheiſts, not only call in queſtion, but impudently deny the myſteries of religion, as incomprehenſible and impoſſible, becauſe inconſiſtent with their carnal reaſon, how-

however agreeable to right reaſon.——But fleſh and blood are ready to ſay of goſpel-myſteries, as Nicodemus of the wonders of regeneration, *How can theſe things be?*——We might ſhew how many errors of the day, whether Arian, Socinian, Arminian, or Pelagian, derive their origin from hence; but I proceed.

The *ſixth* ſort of perſons, who confer with fleſh and blood, are thoſe that conſult with the the *world* in the matters of religion.—Of this ſort are theſe that follow the ill *example*, and ſtudy the carnal *politics* of the world, and join in therewith, eſpecially when it tendeth to advance or ſecure their worldly intereſts. Thus many, in point of worldly example, they rule their actions according to the will and example of their ſuperiors; ſo Iſrael followed Jeroboam. And ſome, to pleaſe a *great* man, will make bold with light and conſcience, directing them another way: or, if they ſuppoſe him to be a *good* man, that takes ſuch and ſuch a courſe, then the example of ſuch will blind the eye of their conſcience, and foſter the argument of fleſh and blood; for, why, ſaith fleſh and blood, may not I do as ſuch a great man, or ſuch a good man doth, that is wiſer than I can pretend to be? Yea, but we are to be *followers of none*, but as they are *followers of Chriſt*; otherwiſe we conſult only with fleſh and blood.—Of this ſort alſo are thoſe, that give up themſelves to the conduct of worldly *policy*, and ſtudy the carnal politics of the world, even in the matters of God and conſcience; and hence will yield a blind obedience to the commandments of men, as Iſrael did to the ſtatutes of Omri, Mic. vi. 16. And Ephraim, who *willingly walked after the commandment*, Hoſ. v. 11. And perhaps all this, not for conſcience ſake, but for intereſt ſake: why, ſaith fleſh and blood, it is better to be wiſe than fool hardy, and expoſe ourſelves to the fury of the government, civil or eccleſiaſtic: ſhould we not take that courſe that will moſt contribute to obtain ſome worldly advantage, to ſecure our worldly intereſt, or to prevent worldly loſſes, croſſes, and inconveniences; and why ſhould we not obey the higher powers? Well, if it be duty you are injoined; why not obey? We ought to

obey

obey them in the Lord, and *for conſcience ſake:* but tho' a man may be doing what is duty in this caſe; yet, if he be ſwayed thereto, not from conſcience, but from ſuch carnal worldly motives, in matters that concern God and religion, then he but conſults with fleſh and blood; and *his fear toward God is taught at by the precepts of men.* But, on the other hand, if you truly doubt of its being duty, before God, that you are called to, then, *whatſoever is not faith is ſin;* and if thus it be ſin, then, *whether ye ought to obey God or man, judge ye?* We conſult with fleſh and blood, if we yield obedience either to civil or eccleſiaſtical authority, any other way but in the Lord: or, if conſcience be merely ſwayed with intereſt.—In a word, all ſinful ſhifts to ſhun the *croſs*, and carnal compliances to ſecure the world, is a conſulting with fleſh and blood: yea, when human authority is more regarded, for the ſake of the world, than the authority of God and Chriſt.

The *ſeventh* ſort of perſons, that conferreth with fleſh and blood are thoſe that conſult outward *peace* and *tranquility*, in the matters of God, even though they have little regard to goſpel-truth and piety: they love to be eaſy, and to live in peace, though it ſhould be at the rate and expence of making *ſhipwreck of faith and a good conſcience.* But, *the wiſdom that is from above is firſt pure, and then peaceable*, James iii. 17.—Firſt purity and truth, and then tranquility and peace, is the due order of heavenly wiſdom: and hence we are commanded to *love the truth and peace;* firſt the truth, and then the peace. Peace without truth is but a conſpiracy againſt the God of truth: therefore, in ſtudying to *follow peace with all men*, we are to obſerve this rule, otherwiſe it cannot be an holy peace, according to what follows, *And holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* The peace of a church can never be maintained with a bleſſing on it, if truth be not the foundation of that peace; for, it is a curſed peace that ſtands not upon that foundation.——But of this ſort of people, that confer with fleſh and blood, are thoſe alſo that ſtudy their own outward peace and eaſe,

eaſe, at *any rate;* and hence will rather ſin than ſuffer: therefore, when perſecution comes, they fall away; fleſh and blood cannot endure the croſs of Chriſt. They are content to follow Chriſt in a fair day; but when foul weather, and a heavy croſs comes, by and bye *they are offended*, Matth. xiii. 21. Our Lord hath fairly warned all his diſciples what a tempeſt of trouble and trial, reproach and perſecution will blow in their face, ſaying, *If any man will be my diſciple, let him take up his croſs, and follow me:* and therefore they are not to promiſe themſelves peace in the world, and a conſtant flouriſhing ſtate of outward proſperity; for he hath ſaid, *In the world ye ſhall have tribulation:* and yet when tribulation comes, hereupon Chriſt is to many, a *ſtone of ſtumbling and a rock of offence.*——Thus they conſult with fleſh and blood, who project nothing but peace and eaſe in the way of duty and religion.

The *eighth* ſort of perſons, who confer with fleſh and blood, are thoſe that conſult with *ſenſe* and *ſelf*, in the matters of God, and of faith, and religion: that is, thoſe who in religion put ſenſe, as it were, in the room of faith, and ſelf in the room of God.

[1.] Some put *ſenſe* in the room of *faith;* and hence their faith is governed by ſenſe and feeling: they do not believe the threatning, becauſe they have the ſenſe and feeling of ſmiling providences: they do not believe the promiſe, becauſe they have the ſenſe and feeling of adverſe and frowning providences: outward providences is made the rule of their faith, not the word of God. Hence, ſaith fleſh and blood, that meaſures the threatning by ſenſe, *Where is the promiſe of his coming? For, ſince the fathers fell aſleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation:* not knowing, *That one day is with God, as a thouſand years; and a thouſand years, as one day:* and that *the heaven and earth, which are now, are kept in ſtore, reſerved unto fire, againſt the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men*, 1 Pet. iii. 4,—8. But *becauſe ſentence againſt theſe is not ſpeedily execute; therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully ſet in them to do evil*, Eccl. viii. 11.: *Deſpiſing the riches of the goodneſs and forbearance of God, and his long-*

ſuffering; not knowing that the goodneſs of God ſhould lead them to repentance, Rom. ii. 4. And, on the other hand, hence, ſaith fleſh and blood, that meaſures the promiſe by ſenſe, Except I ſee ſigns and wonders I will not believe: and like Thomas, *Except I ſee in his hand the print of the nails, and thruſt my hand into his ſide, I will not believe.* Of this ſort are thoſe that diſtruſt all preſent means of faith, and imagining that extraordinary diſcoveries, ſtinking upon outward ſenſe, would make ſuch impreſſions as would do the buſineſs, ſaying, as Luke xix. 30. *If one came from the dead, they would believe;* if they had oracles and miracles; if God did ſpeak to them from heaven, they would believe. But Moſes and the prophets are a ſufficient ground of faith; *If we do not believe them, neither would we believe, tho' one ſhould riſe from the dead.* If we cannot believe the threatening till we feel the execution of it, it is like ſaying, We will not believe, till we be in hell; or, till it be in part execute on earth upon us: why, then our belief of it would not be founded on God's word, but our own ſenſe and feeling; and ſo it would not be faith properly, but ſenſe. If we will not believe the promiſe till we feel the accompliſhment of it, this is like putting the plow before the oxen: a backward way of going to work: yea, it is impoſſible to believe this way; for ſenſe is not fatth: believing and feeling are different things. We may believe, without feeling; but we cannot feel, without firſt believing.

[2.] Some, again, put *ſelf* in the room of God, and the righteouſneſs of God; and ſo evidently conſult with fleſh and blood, while we conſult with our ſelf: and here take a view both of natural or carnal ſelf, and of ſpiritual and religious ſelf.

1. When we gratify *natural* or *carnal* ſelf, we do but conſult with fleſh and blood; when we cannot endure the *mortification* and *ſelf-denial*, which Chriſt calls his diſciples to, and by which they evidence themſelves to be his diſciples. We are called to *mortify our members that are upon the earth;* to *renounce the devil, the world, and the fleſh;* to be denied to all the ſinful pleaſures of time, and carnal company in the world: this

this grates hard upon fleſh and blood, which is ready to cry out with the Jews, *This is a hard ſaying, who can bear it?* Fleſh and blood think it ſtrange that God ſhould plant deſires in them, which he will not allow them to ſatisfy: but as theſe carnal deſires of men, are of themſelves, ſo it is the natural craving of fleſh and blood, that makes people deſire to live as they liſt, and not as they ought: hence ariſes a ſecret diſlike at the purity of the goſpel. But beſide this groſs conſultation with fleſh and blood, in gratifying natural or carnal ſelf.

2. When we gratify *ſpiritual* and *religious* ſelf, we do but conſult with fleſh and blood. And there are two ſpecial ways wherein men gratify their religious ſelf, namely, when they ſeek to eſtabliſh their *own credit before men*, and when they ſeek to eſtabliſh their *own righteouſneſs before God*, in all their religious performances.

(1.) When they ſeek to eſtabliſh their *own credit before men*, and to have a name, reputation, and applauſe, without having a ſingle eye to the glory of God: theſe carnal ends and deſigns, in men's ſpiritual-like performances and religious duties, are a conſulting with fleſh and blood, while they *love the praiſe of men, more than the praiſe of God*, John xii. 43. This is a piece of ſelf and carnal conſultation, which, as it reigns over hypocrites, who yield themſelves to the power and government of it; ſo it may prevail over true believers, who, many times, may find themſelves under the tyranny and bondage of it. This is a thief that will ſteal into the miniſters ſtudy and pulpit, to rob God of his glory there, that ſelf may get what belongs to God. This is a robber that follows people from the chamber to the church, and ſpoils all their duties of hearing, praying, and praiſing; that, inſtead of giving praiſe to God, they may get praiſe to themſelves:——Hence fleſh and blood makes the man have no pleaſure in duty, which hath brought in no applauſe to the man; and makes him take pleaſure in that performance, that brings in moſt reputation and renown to the performer.——From

this principle a miniſter will *preach Chriſt out of envy*, that he may be thought as evangelical as the beſt: and from this principle alſo, ſome people will be as throng about religious duties, as any can be; that they may be thought as religious as the beſt. Thus, *for a pretence*, the *Phariſees made long prayers*, and did *many things to be ſeen of men.* This is an attempt, as it were, to ſwear by the Lord, and ſwear by Malcham; to ſerve Chriſt and Belial, God and ſelf both. See how our Lord ſpeaks of this, Luke xvi. 15. *Ye are they which juſtify yourſelves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly eſteemed among men, is abomination in the ſight of God.*——Thus, I ſay, men conſult with fleſh and blood, when, in the matters of God, their great deſign is to eſtabliſh their own credit before men.

(2.) When they ſeek to eſtabliſh their *own righteouſneſs before God*, as the Jews did, Rom. x. 3. Theſe two parts of ſelf do effectually oppoſe all true religion: for, as in the former reſpect, thoſe that eſtabliſh their own credit put ſelf in the room of God and his glory, which is the ultimate end; ſo, in the latter reſpect, thoſe that eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, they put ſelf in the room of Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs, which is the mean to that end. And now, while we ſeek a righteouſneſs in ourſelves, and in our own duties, for juſtification and acceptance with God, we do, in effect, bring down Chriſt, and ſet up fleſh and blood in his room, and conſult therewith. Men naturally ſeek after a righteouſneſs in themſelves, or ſalvation by their own perſonal obedience, according to the tenor of the covenant of works. Man's righteouſneſs was once in himſelf, when he remained in his primitive integrity: but, ſince the fall, the Lord has removed our righteouſneſs from ourſelves to Chriſt, who has become the *Lord our righteouſneſs*; yet how few are prevailed upon to relinquiſh ſelf and ſelf-righteouſneſs *! Many ſeek to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs that will not take with the charge.

* See this point of doctrine more fully illuſtrated, Vol. III. Serm. XL. near the beginning.

1. Theſe

1. Theſe do ſeek to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs who can hardly be brought, either doctrinally or practically, to own, *That believers are wholly, and altogether, delivered from the law, as a covenant of works;* but ſtill are for *ſeeking righteouſneſs, as it were, by the works of the law*, Rom. ix. 32.——This was the ſtumbling ſtone over which the Jewiſh nation ſtumbled and fell headlong into ruin.

2. Of this ſort are thoſe that only cover their *legal ſentiments* with a *goſpel varniſh*, while they bring in faith and repentance, and the like, as proper conditions of the covenant of grace, in room of the perfect obedience required in the covenant of works; which is a razing of the foundation of the goſpel, and an eſtabliſhing of a righteouſneſs in our own perſon, for juſtification before God.

3. Of this ſort are theſe alſo that bring in *goſpel repentance*, and the like, as neceſſary conditions and qualifications, in order to our juſtification before and acceptance with God *. Again,

4. Of this ſort are thoſe who, in principle or practice, contend that it is the *believer's duty* to be influenced, in his obedience, either by the *ſlaviſh fears of hell*, or the *legal hopes of heaven*. To obey from a *legal hope of heaven*, as if we were to obtain heaven by our obedience, as it is contrary to the apoſtle's doctrine, 1 Theſſ. v. 9. where he ſays, *That God hath appointed us to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for us that we ſhould live with him;* ſo it affronts the obedience of Chriſt, whereby alone our title to heaven is ſecured. To obey from a *ſlaviſh fear of hell*, as if our obedience and duty would ſecure us therefrom, is like oppoſition to, and denial of the virtue of Chriſt's death, whereby alone our freedom from hell is ſecured.

5. Of this ſort are thoſe who bring the believer, upon every new ſin, under a *liableneſs to everlaſting death and damnation*, which is the penalty of the covenant of

* See a refutation of this and ſeveral other doctrinal errors, in Vol. III. Uſe 2, for *Reproof*.

works,

works, and which, though his ſins deſerved, yet the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to him, not only ſecures him from it, but from ever being liable to it. Thoſe who thus will make the believer liable to that law-ſentence, becauſe of his ſin, muſt of conſequence ſuppoſe him not liable becauſe of his obedience; and ſo they make him to be juſtified by his obedience, and condemned by his diſobedience to the law; contrary to our received principles, in our Standards, declaring, "That the believer is not under the law, as a covenant, "either to be juſtified or condemned *." The believer is neither juſtified by his obedience to the law, nor condemned for his diſobedience: but if he diſobeys, his God and Father hath other ways of chaſtiſing him in a fatherly manner, according to Pſal. lxxxix. 30,—33. In all theſe ways men do but eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, and ſo conſult with fleſh and blood.

In a word, Of this ſort are all theſe that ſuſpect the *doctrine of the goſpel* as if it were an *enemy to the law and holineſs*. Such is the propenſity of nature towards the law, as a covenant of works, whenever awakened to any thoughtfulneſs about religion, that when the goſpel declares that there is no juſtification by the deeds of the law; and that we are juſtified by faith, without the works of the law; and that righteouſneſs is accounted to, or juſtification conferred upon them that *worketh not*, but *believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, Rom. iv. 4, 5.: Why, when this evangelical doctrine is opened, preſently the legal diſpoſition of men ſuſpect this goſpel doctrine, and ſay of the publiſhers of it, as the Jews did of Paul, Acts xviii. 13. *This fellow perſuades men to worſhip God, contrary to the law.* Yea, not only contrary to the ceremonial law, but even to the moral law: for, muſt not men do as well as they can, in obedience to God's law; and then expect to be juſtified and accepted. Thus goſpel doctrine comes to be challenged for Antinomianiſm; as if it allowed men a carnal liberty for ſin, and freedom to break the law, or diſ-

* Confeſſion of Faith, Chap. xix. Sect. 6.

couraged

couraged the practice of holineſs; which is one of the greateſt calumnies that can pe raiſed againſt the goſpel of Chriſt; and betrays dreadful ignorance of the goſpel of grace: which ſhews plainly, that a man never *lives unto God*, in point of *holineſs*, till he be *dead to the law* in point of *righteouſneſs*, Galatians ii. 9.: nor ever brings forth *fruit unto God*, till he be *dead to the law, and married to Chriſt*, Rom. vii. 4. *. But we need not think ſtrange of this ſuſpicion, nor the calumnies that iſſue from thence; for Chriſt Jeſus, our glorious Lord himſelf, was obliged to defend himſelf againſt ſuch calumnies as theſe; and therefore ſaith, *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law:* I ſee, might he ſay, that is your thought, that is your ſuſpicion; you ſuſpect my doctrine as if it was an enemy to the law and to holineſs; *I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil.* And the apoſtles had themſelves to defend from this charge, *Do we make void the law thro' faith? God forbid; we eſtabliſh the law* †.——Thus you ſee in how many reſpects people may be ſaid to confer with fleſh and blood.

* This point of doctrine is very copiouſly handled by our Author, in the following Sermon, intitled, *Law-death, and Goſpel-life.* See alſo Vol. III. Serm. XXXVIII. Uſe 2. for *Reproof.*

† About the time, when this Sermon was preached, the conteſt about the *Marrow* doctrine was upon the field, and the ſupporters thereof, were accuſed as Antinomians. See the affair accounted for, Vol. I. page 238. See alſo Serm. XXIII. and XXVIII. in a note at the foot on the firſt particular of the *Application*, in both Sermons.

SERMON

SERMON XXII.

GALATIANS i. 16.

—Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.

[The ſecond Sermon on this Text]

HAVING finiſhed what we intended upon the doctrinal part of the ſubject, by explaining what is to be underſtood by fleſh and blood; confirmed the truth of the doctrine, by ſhewing that we are not to confer therewith in the matters of God; aſſigned the reaſons therefore; entered upon the application of the ſubject, and have applied it in an uſe of information, caution, and reprehenſion: this doctrine may next be applied for *dehortation* and *direction*. And,

The *dehortation* is, O Sirs, *conſult not with fleſh and blood.*——And for *motives*, conſider the *reaſons* of the doctrine, formerly aſſigned. Fleſh and blood are *unable* to give advice in the matters of God; and as unable, ſo they are *unwilling*, and conſequently *unfit* to conſult with: yea, to conſult with fleſh and blood is *dangerous*; for, if we conſult therewith, fleſh and blood will *hinder* us from duty; fleſh and blood will *lead us to ſin;* fleſh and blood will *impede* our ſuffering for Chriſt and his cauſe: yea, if we conſult with fleſh and blood, we will conſult with the *devil*, as Saul did; and ſo to conſult with fleſh and blood, is to conſult with our own ruin: yea, the diſhonour of God, and the diſcredit of the goſpel. But theſe I paſs, having formerly inſiſted upon them.

But for *direction* in this matter, it may be aſked, 1. *What* are we to conſult with, if we may not conſult

ſult with fleſh and blood. 2. What are the moſt proper *means*, for preventing our conferring with fleſh and blood.

I. *Whom* or *what* are we to conſult with, if we may not conſult with fleſh and blood? How are we to conſult? To this we reply; in the general, we ought to conſult with *God:* with God, in Chriſt, by the Spirit; or, with the Father, in the Son, by the Holy Ghoſt: I mean, we ought under the conduct of the Spirit, to conſult with God, as he is the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that in all the duties of religion, and ordinances of his appointment, whether public or private; eſpecially in prayer, ſaying, with David, Pſalm cxliii. 10. *Thy Spirit is good; lead me to the land of uprightneſs.*——We ought to ſeek, that he would *guide by his counſel*, till he *bring unto glory;* and give his Spirit for our guide: for he hath given us the greateſt encouragement ſo to do; *If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children; how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk him?* Luke xi. 13. Every good gift cometh from him; and therefore, to whom ſhould we go, for counſel and direction, but to the *Father of lights*, and to Chriſt, the *wonderful counſellor:* and to the *Spirit of truth*, who is promiſed to *lead his people into all truth?* If we do not acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, and conſult with him, we will certainly conſult with fleſh and blood.

But more particularly, becauſe God hath given us counſellors under him, we are to conſult ſuch things, or perſons, as he allows us to conſult with, in a ſubordination to himſelf. If we would know then, more particularly, how we are to conſult with God, we may do it by conſulting, 1. The oracles of God. 2. The children of God. 3. The meſſengers of God. 4. The glory of God. 5. The analogy of faith. 6. The conſcience, God's deputy in our breaſt.

1. We are to conſult *the oracles of God;* I mean, the *ſcriptures of truth*, in the matters of faith, in the matters of God and conſcience; *Search the ſcriptures,*

for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and thoſe are they which teſtify of me, John v. 39. The ſcripture is the judge of controverſy.——General aſſemblies and counſels may err; ſo cannot the ſcripture: for, it is *the more ſure word of prophecy, to which we do well to take take heed, as to a light ſhining in a dark place*, &c. 2 Peter i. 19, 20, 21. We are therefore exhorted to *let the word of God dwell in us rightly, in all wiſdom*; and to *receive with meekneſs the ingrafted word, which is able to ſave our ſouls*; being *doers of the word*, and *not hearers only, deceiving our own ſouls*, James. i. 21, 22. See how Timothy is commended for his conſulting with the ſcripture, *from his youth*, 2 Timothy iii. 15, 16, 17. Thus we are to conſult with God in the ſcripture.

2. We are to conſult the *children of God*, the ſaints of God; eſpecially ſuch of them as are moſt tender, and live neareſt unto God, and have moſt of the mind of God; and eſpecially at ſuch times when they and their God are in good terms together. Though we are not to conſult with carnal friends, in the matters of God; nor yet to follow the carnal counſel of godly friends; yet, we do not conſult with fleſh and blood, when we follow the godly counſel of godly friends, and the ſpiritual advice of ſpiritual friends: the word encourages us to confer with ſuch, Mal. iii. 16. Then they *that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name.* And again, *He that walketh with the wiſe, ſhall be wiſe.* It is good conſulting with thoſe, whom God is communicating his ſecrets unto; and now, *the ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, Pſalm xxv. 14.

3. We are to conſult the *meſſengers of God*; for ſo we are warranted to do, Mal. ii. 7. *The prieſt's lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth; for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts.* 2 Chron. xx. 20. *Believe in the Lord your God, and ſo ye ſhall be eſtabliſhed: believe his prophets, ſo ſhall ye proſper.*

But

But what if the prophets be deceived? what if the miniſter be miſtaken? Or, the prieſt's lips do not keep knowledge, or hold by the truth? Why, we are to receive nothing indeed from men, by an implicite faith without laying it to the rule, Iſaiah viii. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* We muſt *prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good:* and like the noble Bereans, *ſearch the ſcriptures daily whether theſe things be ſo,* Acts xvii. 11. And if they were commended for not crediting the apoſtles themſelves, that were immediately inſpired from heaven, without comparing their doctrine with the ſcripture: how much more commendable is it for people to compare the doctrine of ordinary teachers with the word, and the analogy of faith; Neglect in this particular makes many groſly ignorant; and hence to be carried about with every wind of doctrine, not knowing whom to truſt, or what to believe: *They err, not knowing the ſcriptures.*——Well, but thoſe that know the ſcriptures better than we do, explain it ſo and ſo, in a different manner from others. It may be ſo; but the ſcripture is the beſt explainer of itſelf: if we ſearched it dependently upon the Lord, light would ariſe out of darkneſs; ſuch light as would darken and confound all the falſe gloſſes as the devil put upon it in his debating with Chriſt; but our Lord Jeſus did, with other ſcripture, refute the devil's corrupt gloſſes which he put upon the ſcriptures that he cited. However, I ſay, *the prieſt's lips ſhould preſerve knowledge, and we ſhould ſeek the law from his mouth:* he ought to be a good counſellor, a faithful guide; and we ought to conſult and confer with him, in the matters of God; and we ought to take the counſel that is agreeable to the word of God, and to be followers of ſuch, as far as they are followers of Chriſt, and no further.

4. We are to conſult the *glory of God* in all. If we conſult our own ends, it is but fleſh and blood: but if, in all things, we conſult the glory of God, as our ultimate end, then we conſult not with fleſh and blood.

Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we ought to do all to the glory of God: and in all the matters of God and conſcience, it is always ſafeſt to conſult what is moſt for advancing this great end, *the glory of God in Chriſt*; the glory of his ſovereign grace; the glory of his infinite holineſs and other perfections. Whatever tendeth to the diſhonour of God, and of his name, comes of fleſh and blood; and of deviliſh carnal conſultation. The world are ſet upon pleaſing of fleſh and blood, though it ſhould be never ſo diſpleaſing to God: they are ſet upon the exalting of ſelf and the debaſing of Chriſt; the enthroning of ſelf, and the dethroning of God. But, O Sirs, if the glory of God was conſulted, how remote would people be from conſulting with fleſh and blood? God's glory would lead people up to the hill of God: but fleſh and blood takes them down the ſtream of the world. Why are ſo many carried down with the ſtream of the times? Why, they do not conſult God's glory.

5. We are to conſult the *analogy of faith*, and *pureſt antiquities: Thus ſaith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and ſee, and aſk for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls*, Jer. vi. 16. And, indeed, in order to the right uſe of the oracles of God, or the unerring rule of the ſcripture, that rule is to be uſed in an agreeableneſs to the analogy of faith, *i. e.* There are ſome fundamental truths that are as firſt principles, founded upon the cleareſt teſtimony of the word; and whatever is not agreeable in principle or practice to that analogy of faith, we may be ſure is not agreeable to the word of God, and conſequently favours not of God, but of fleſh and blood. If you aſk, what theſe fundamental truths or firſt principles are? Why, they are ſuch, with reſpect whereunto all, that know any thing experimentally about religion, are beyond doubt: ſuch as, that there is a God: that he is an eternal, immutable, and independent Being; hath ordained all things, executing his decrees in the works of creation and providence: that he created man after his own image: that man fell from his happineſs, and brought himſelf into

into a ſtate of ſin and miſery: that God ſent his Son to take on our nature, that therein he might ſuffer and ſatisfy divine juſtice, pay the price of redemption; and that there is no remedy for us but in him and by him; that to all the elect he applies this redemption, enlightning their minds in the knowledge of himſelf, ſubduing their wills; and that whom he thus regenerates and converts, he juſtifies, adopts, and ſanctifies, giving them his Spirit to quicken them, and guide them from ſtep to ſtep, till he land them in glory, and they be eternally bleſſed in and with himſelf: and that all others, being left in their ſins, ſhall be eternally damned, and deſtroyed with *everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of God.* Theſe, and the like, are fundamental truths, founded upon the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt grounds of ſcripture, and linked together inſeparably: and whatever doctrine or principle runs in a direct oppoſition to any of theſe, ſavours not of God, but of fleſh and blood. And therefore, we ought, I ſay, carefully to conſult the analogy of faith.

6. We are to conſult with the *deputy of God* in our breaſt; I mean, *conſcience*, when it is under the government and regulation of the word and Spirit of God: for, if it be not thus regulate and governed, I dare not ſay it is fit to be conſulted with; nay, I am not for conſcience being conſulted with, and regarded in this matter, unleſs it be guided by the word and Spirit of God: for many may pretend they act according to the light of their conſcience, while yet they are but under the conduct of a blind and miſled conſcience; and if *the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch.* Paul pretended conſcience when a Phariſee; yea, when he was perſecuting the church of Chriſt; *He verily thought with himſelf, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth*, Acts xxvi. 9. Yea, Chriſt hath told us, that many perſecutors of his members will think, that *they do God good ſervice:* and ſo, following a blind conſcience, they may be but conſulting with fleſh and blood. But conſcience, guided by the word and Spirit of God, is to be conſulted with; and then is the man's walk

a con-

a conſcientious walk, living in *all good conſcience before God*: and ſtudying to have a *conſcience void of offence toward God and toward man: and herein ſhould we exerciſe ourſelves*: for, conſcience reaches all relative duties between magiſtrate and ſubject, miniſter and people, parent and child, maſter and ſervant: yea, all religious duties toward God and man; and ſo far as we croſs the light of conſcience, and go over the belly thereof, we do but conſult with fleſh and blood, and caſt an affront upon God's deputy.

II. What are the moſt proper *means* for preventing our conferring with fleſh and blood? I ſhall obſerve two things in the text, which were the notable means for preventing Paul's conferring with fleſh and blood.—The firſt was his getting a *ſaving revelation* of Chriſt in him; *He revealed his Son in me.* The next was his *ſpeedy rejecting* the counſel of fleſh and blood; *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*

1*ſt*, The firſt was, his getting a *ſaving revelation* of Chriſt in him; *It pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me.* Here is the beſt antidote in the world againſt carnal conſultation. It is true, ſome that have Chriſt ſavingly revealed in them, may yet conſult too much with fleſh and blood; for true believers may miſcarry far, through unbelief: but ſurely, the more that Chriſt is revealed in a man, the leſs will he conſult with fleſh and blood, in the various ways condeſcended upon in the doctrinal part of the ſubject. Here two things may be enquired into, 1. What is the *nature* of this revelation of Chriſt; 2. What *influence* it hath to prevent and hinder our conſulting with fleſh and blood?

[1.] What is this *revelation* of Chriſt? For underſtanding this, you would know, that the revelation of Chriſt is twofold, *viz.* external and internal.

(1.) The *external* revelation of Chriſt by the word. The light of *nature* and *reaſon* cannot reveal Chriſt: that light hath its own uſe to guide us in the things of nature, but not in the things of God; *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*, 2 Cor. ii. 14. It is by the *word* that Chriſt is revealed, and the

the goſpel notified and made known to us; and yet, where there is no more but this external revelation, there is no ſaving change. Therefore,

(2.) There is the *internal* revelation of Chriſt, by the Spirit; when Chriſt is not only revealed to us, but in us: *He revealed his Son in me.* Now, the queſtion is, *What is this internal, ſaving revelation of Chriſt?* I think the beſt way to underſtand it, is, under the conduct of the Spirit of God, to conſider every word of this emphatic deſcription of the matter; *He revealed his Son in me.* And every word will afford a thought for opening up the nature of this ſaving work of divine illumination, in the knowledge of Chriſt: and, by the nature of this light wherein Paul was here enlightened, we may try, whether *the God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ever ſhined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt:* for,

1. It is a *clear* and *manifeſt* light: this is imported in the very word REVELATION; *He* REVEALED *his Son in me.* Revelation ſpeaks out clearneſs and evidence. As God, in *creation*, and making the world, began with light, ſaying *Let there be light, and there was light;* ſo in *converſion*, he begins with illumination: *They that know thy name will put their truſt in thee.* None will believe till they clearly and plainly take up the object, though they cannot know it fully and perfectly: *He that ſeeth the Son, and believeth in him, hath everlaſting life*, John vi. 40. The revelation of Chriſt doth effectually diſpel the maſſy clouds of ſpiritual darkneſs and ignorance, that ſits hard and heavy upon the eyes of the underſtanding: for by nature we are as ignorant and brutiſh, in the things of God, as the beaſts that periſh, till the Spirit be ſent, as a *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Chriſt*, and then the man ſees clearly; not like the man that ſaw with his eyes, half open, *men like trees walking;* but, in *God's light, he ſees light clearly*, and gets ſome ſuitable uptakings of God's teſtimony concerning his Son, teſtifying, that he is a well-qualified Saviour, able to ſave to the uttermoſt: teſtifying that ſalvation is to be had

had no other way; *That there is no other name given under heaven, whereby we can be ſaved;* teſtifying that he is ready to ſave all comers; and that whoever will is welcome: yea, teſtifying that every one who hears of him, hath a warrant to come to him, and accept of him; and that it is not preſumption in poor ſinners to come. This revelation, I ſay, imports a clear light opening up the object of faith, and giving the ſoul ſome diſtant uptaking of God's teſtimony concerning Chriſt; for, *whatſoever maketh manifeſt is light.* Again,

2. It is a *ſupernatural* light; *He revealed his* SON *in me: It pleaſed* GOD *to do it,* ſaith Paul: this light was from above, from the *Father of lights:* fleſh and blood revealed not this to Paul; but his Father which is in heaven: this is given from heaven; *To you it is given to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven, to others it is not given,* Mat. xiii. 11. Human parts and literature could not give Paul this inſight and diſcerning; he wanted not his ſhare of all the learning of that age: but *the natural man,* let him be never ſo learned, and have never ſuch a ſtock of natural parts, and acquired literature, yet he *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, for they are ſpiritually diſcerned:* the man muſt be, Θεοδίδακτος, *taught of God.* True ſaving light is, ſpiritual and ſupernatural: *He that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh to the Son:* and the Father revealeth the Son in a ſovereign way and manner; not from any regard to ſome good qualifications in the ſinner, but from his own ſovereign good-will and pleaſure: *It pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me.*

3. It is an *evangelical* light; *He revealed his* SON *in me.* HIS SON: it is not an abſolute God, a God out of Chriſt, as he is revealed to the ſinner by the law, as a covenant of works; but God, in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, according to the goſpel, which diſcovers him as a *God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf.* He revealed his Son; the Son of his love, *in whom he is well-pleaſed.* His Son, who is the *Sent and Sealed of the Father:*

his

his Son, who is the *brightneſs of his glory*, and *the expreſs image of his perſon:* his Son, *in whom it pleaſed the Father that all fulneſs ſhould dwell;* and *in whom dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead:* and ſo it is a revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; *He revealed his Son in me.* The law, as a covenant of life and works, doth not reveal Chriſt: when God reveals himſelf, according to that diſpenſation, he is a conſuming fire out of Chriſt to the ſinner; and at beſt is revealed as a commanding God, and a wrathful threatening God: but when God reveals himſelf in his Son, then he is known as a promiſing God, a gracious God, a reconciled God. And this goſpel revelation, this evangelical light, brings in peace and quiet to the whole ſoul: hence Chriſt ſays to his diſciples, when it ſeems their views of God were more dark and legal, apprehending God in the law, without apprehending Chriſt in the goſpel, John xiv. 1. *Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* And there he ſhews them, ver. 6. that he is *the way to the Father;* and that *no man cometh to the Father but by him.* Hence, leſt any ſhould imagine, that a view of the Son would lead them off from a view of the Father, he adds, ver. 9. *He that hath ſeen me hath ſeen the Father:* and ſo, when the Father reveals his Son, he reveals himſelf in him. How ſweet is it then to conſider, that firſt the Father reveals the Son, according to John vi. 45.; and then the Son reveals the Father, according to John i. 17, 18. Where, after it is ſaid, that *the law was given by Moſes, but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt,* it follows, *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* And thus *he revealed his Son in me;* i. e. he ſhewed me his own glory, in the face of his Son. Here is the ſaving goſpel-revelation.

4. It is an *internal* light; this is evident from the particle IN, *He revealed his Son* IN *me:* not only *to* me, by an external objective revelation; but *in* me, by an internal ſubjective revelation. It is not light without, preſented to the bodily eye, ſhining outwardly, like that wherewith ſome poor ignorant creatures are deceiv-

ed, who ſpeak of their having ſeen about them, or in ſuch a part of the room, or of the bed, a ſtrange light, or a pleaſant repreſentation; while yet they may be brutiſhly ignorant of Chriſt: for, though I ſhall not diſprove all external manifeſtation, as if God, in extraordinary caſes, might not, by the miniſtry of angels, make ſome outward glorious appearance to his own; yet, as Chriſt himſelf is not now to be ſeen any other way, than by the eye of faith, in the light of internal ſaving manifeſtation, by the Spirit, ſo theſe external manifeſtations are evidently deluſive, eſpecially where there is nothing but groſs darkneſs and ignorance in the mind. It is not light without, I ſay, but light within; and that not *enthuſiaſtical*, like the Quakers light, but ſpiritual and ſcriptural, ſuitable to the objective revelation of Chriſt in the word and in the goſpel: nor is it *notional* internal light, making impreſſion upon the fancy, like a ſtrong imagination: but it is light *irradiating* the whole ſoul; *For God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Corinth. iv. 6. *In our hearts;* and hence cometh that *heart-melting*, when this Sun of righteouſneſs ariſeth, with his warm beams. And hence alſo cometh *heart-perſuaſion;* a full perſuaſion of the truth of God's teſtimony concerning Chriſt; the man believes, and is ſure; knoweth, and is perſuaded upon the teſtimony of God. Hence alſo *heart-approbation* of Chriſt, and the device of ſalvation, in him and through him. O! ſays the ſoul, this way of ſalvation is *worthy of all acceptation.* Hence alſo *heart-ſatisfaction:* it is *ſweeter than honey or the honey-comb.*—— There is a ſavour in the name of Chriſt; it is *as ointment poured forth:* the heart and ſoul acquieſces in Chriſt, as fully anſwering all its neceſſities, and all its deſires. Hence *heart-purification:* the more the man ſees him, the more he is like him; for it is a begun heaven; and in heaven the ſaints are *like him, for they ſee him as he is;* ſo here in proportion to the ſight.— And, in a word, hence *heart-experience:* there is a feeling

feeling of power and virtue in the revelation of Chriſt; a taſte of his ſweetneſs and excellency. Other knowledge and learning is merely ſpeculative; and hence the pavement of hell is laid with the ſculls of many great ſcholars, who have had their heads freighted with notions of God and Chriſt, but never their hearts irradiated with the light of life, ſo as to have experience of the ſoul-quickning and ſin-killing efficacy of divine light. Thus it makes much heart-work, being internal light.

5. It is a *cloſs appropriating* light; this I draw from the *me*, in the words; *He revealed his Son in* ME. The ſaving knowledge of Chriſt is appropriating; therefore Paul calls it, *the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord*, Phillip. iii. 8. The devils have ſome knowledge of Chriſt; but cannot ſay he is their Saviour; Nebuchadnezzar could ſay, *There is a God of power;* but he is the God of Shadrach, Meſhach, and Abed-nego: Darius calls him the *God of Daniel.* But this ſaving revelation comes cloſs home to the man himſelf; and natively tends to the man's participation of the good that he ſeeth; if Chriſt be revealed ſavingly as a Prophet, it is for teaching me; if as a Prieſt, it is for atoning for me; if as a King, it is for conquering me to himſelf, and ſubduing my foes under him; if as a Saviour, it is for ſaving me. There is a particular application of Chriſt for wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption to the man's ſelf. It is not a general ſpeculation, ſaying, Here is a full, ſuitable, glorious Saviour for ſinners: but it is like a marriage-application and appropiation, ſaying, Here is a match for me; I apprehend him and take him as given to me: *He revealed his Son in me.* According to the meaſure of illumination and faith, accordingly it comes to this particular me; *He loved me, and gave himſelf for me.*

6. It is a *glorious* and *manifeſt* light, as may be gathered from the whole context of this verſe; which ſhews, at leaſt, four things that contribute to make it very glorious.

(1.) It is glorious in the *ſpring* and *origin* of it, *viz.* the good-will and pleaſure of God; *It pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me: even ſo Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.* Proud fleſh and blood may diſpute the ſovereignty of grace: but it is beyond diſpute with all the children of grace, when in their right wits, that all ſaving bleſſings are owing to, and reſolve in this origin, the good pleaſure of God.

(2.) It is glorious in the *method* and *manner* of it; *He revealed his Son in me:* here is a glorious Trinity all at work; He, namely, the Father, did reveal his Son, by the Holy Ghoſt, in me. For this is the work of the Spirit, as a *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt*, Epheſ. i. 7.; *given* of the Father for this end, as that verſe doth ſhew us: and *promiſed* of the Son for this end, John xv. 26. *When the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you, from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he ſhall teſtify of me.* And again, John xvi. 14. *He ſhall glorify me; for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you.* This is what is here made out in Paul: ſo it is alſo made out in all that are ſavingly illuminated in the knowledge of Chriſt; the Father reveals the Son by the Holy Ghoſt. This is the glory of ſaving light and knowledge: it is God the Father that enlightens the mind, in the knowledge of Chriſt, by the powerful irradiation and operation of the Spirit.

(3.) It is glorious in the *end* and *deſign* of it; *That I might* PREACH *him among the Gentiles.* It is true, indeed, every real Chriſtian is not enlightened for this end, to preach Chriſt among the Gentiles, as Paul was: but all that have Chriſt revealed in them, are enlightened for ſome ſuch glorious end, namely, that they may commend Chriſt unto the world, both by their words and by their walk: that they may ſerve and honour him on earth; and that they may praiſe and glorify him for ever in heaven; yea, that they may preach him forth unto others, according to their call and ſtation: if not in a miniſterial and authoritative way; yet in a practical and charitative way. And

hence,

hence, all that are ſavingly enlightened, according to the meaſure of illumination, in the knowledge of Chriſt, will find a ſweet diſpoſition to proclaim him in the world, and to do all that they can to recommend him to others, like the pſalmiſt, Pſalm li. 12, 13. *Reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit; then will I teach tranſgreſſors thy ways, and ſinners ſhall be converted unto thee.*

(4.) It is glorious in the immediate *effect* of it, as the words of the text declare; IMMEDIATELY *I conferred not with fleſh and blood:* inſtantly a change is wrought upon the man, ſo ſoon as Chriſt is revealed in him; for, *beholding the glory of the Lord, we are changed.* It is a fair owning and confeſſion, that before this time he had been all along conſulting with fleſh and blood; and under the conduct of carnal reaſon, ſelf, and ſelf-righteouſneſs: but now he is made to *rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus,* and hath *no confidence in the fleſh.* The conferrence with fleſh and blood is ſo far broken up, as Chriſt is revealed: *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*——Thus much of the *nature* of this revelation of Chriſt. And now I am led to the other queſtion, namely,

[2.] What *influence* this revelation of Chriſt hath upon preventing our conſulting with fleſh and blood? This queſtion is of great moment, as being the hinge of the doctrine, ſtating the connexion between the revelation of Chriſt, and not conſulting with fleſh and blood in the matters of God. For the doctrine may be thus framed.

That as there ought to be no conſulting with fleſh and blood, in divine matters; ſo the beſt preſervative againſt this evil is, a ſaving internal revelation of Chriſt: Or thus, *That freedom from carnal conſultation, is a fruit of ſaving illumination.*

Now, to give anſwer to this queſtion, you would know, that the influence which the revelation of Chriſt hath, to prevent our conſultating with fleſh and blood, is twofold,

1. Moral and argumentative.
2. Phyſical and operative.

(1.) The

(1.) The ſaving revelation of Chriſt influenceth this not conſulting with fleſh and blood, in a *moral* and *argumentative* way, while it affords the moſt powerful arguments and ſtrong perſuaſions, not to conſult with fleſh and blood. For the revelation of Chriſt natively leads the ſoul to reaſon, and argues thus: "O! hath "God revealed his Son in me? Is it God himſelf that "hath revealed Chriſt ſavingly to and in me? And "ſhall I fight againſt this God, with theſe carnal wea- "pons of fleſh and blood? Did it pleaſe him to do ſo "to me? Was it his good pleaſure to reveal Chriſt? "And ſhall I follow my carnal pleaſure, to the diſ- "pleaſure of this God? Hath he revealed ſuch an one "as his Son in me? And ſhall I hug ſelf in me?— "Fleſh and blood hath not revealed Chriſt in me; "and ſhall I follow the carnal conduct of fleſh and "blood?"

But more particularly, this *moral influence* it hath to prevent conſulting with fleſh and blood will further appear, if we conſider, that when Chriſt is revealed, there is ſuch a diſplay made of the glory of God in him, as tendeth mightily to reaſon the man out of all his carnal reaſon. For inſtance,

1. The revelation of Chriſt diſplayeth the *wiſdom* of God; for, *In him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge:* yea, herein the man ſees *the manifold wiſdom of God;* and *the wiſdom of God in a myſtery:* and when this is diſcovered, ſurely it ſpoils all carnal politics; yea, and makes carnal wiſdom to hide its face with bluſhing: yea, *God makes fooliſh the wiſdom of this world.*

2. The revelation of Chriſt diſplays the *power* of God: for, he is *Chriſt the power of God,* as well as *the wiſdom of God,* 1 Cor. i. 24. And now, ſays the enlightened ſoul, when Chriſt the wiſdom of God, and the power of God is diſplayed, "O! what need I truſt "to the policy of men? Or, what need I fear the "power of men, that are againſt me? Or truſt in the "power and policy of men, even when they ſeem to "be for me? Here is almighty power that I am called "to confide in; even the power of a God in Chriſt:

"*Truſt*

"*Truſt ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Je-*
"*hovah is everlaſting ſtrength: he is able to ſave to the*
"*uttermoſt.*"

3. The revelation of Chriſt diſplays the *holineſs* of God: and ſo this makes the unholineſs and ſinfulneſs of all carnal conſultation to appear ſo: it ſhames the man out of his carnal counſels. "O! is he ſuch an "infinitely holy God, that he hated ſin as much as "he loved his eternal Son? And ſhall I take any un-"holy courſe? Is this conferring with fleſh and blood "agreeable to the infinite holineſs of God, in the face "of Chriſt, which I have ſeen."

4. The revelation of Chriſt diſplays the *juſtice* of God; both his *vindictive* juſtice, in puniſhing ſin to the utmoſt, upon the Surety, when it was imputed to him; and *retributive* juſtice, in giving all good things to Chriſt and his ſeed, as a reward of his obedience to the death: and in all this God hath given the moſt noble indication; that, as he will not let ſin go unpu-niſhed, wherever it is, whether it be in his own, by fa-therly chaſtiſement; or in others, by wrathful reſent-ment: ſo he will not let goſpel-obedience and holineſs, where-ever it is, want its reward of grace in Chriſt; and therefore ſaith the enlightened ſoul, "Oh! this "conſulting with fleſh and blood, is altogether diſa-"greeable to that revelation of divine juſtice in Chriſt, "whether vindictive or remunerative, that I have got. "Shall I run upon the thick boſſes of his buckler, and "provoke him to anger? Or, ſhall I take a courſe, "that hath nothing of that promiſe of the ſweet reward "of grace in Jeſus? Alas! this I muſt not do."

5. The revelation of Chriſt diſplays the *faithfulneſs* and *truth* of God: for ſo he is the truth, as he hath ſealed the truth of all the words of God, and all the promiſes of the covenant. "Now, ſaith the enlight-"ned ſoul, is God ſo true to me, and ſhall I be ſo falſe "to him? Is his veracity engaged in the promiſe, and "his promiſe ſealed with the blood of Chriſt? And "ſhall I not take his word for my ſupport? And take "his word, as a ſufficient ſecurity for my protection, "proviſion, and direction? And what need I take

"any

" any ſinful ſhift, by conſulting with fleſh and blood? " *Faithful is he that hath promiſed*, ſaying, *I will never* " *leave thee, nor forſake thee*," Heb. xiii. 5.

6. The revelation of Chriſt diſplays the *mercy*, *grace*, and *love* of God: for, when Chriſt is ſeen, then the ſoul ſees God in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelf; and he is ſeen to be well-pleaſed in Chriſt: when he appears, then the *kindneſs and love of God, towards men, appears*, Titus iii. 4. And now, this kindneſs and love of God, is a moſt powerful argument, againſt the conſulting with fleſh and blood. " What! ſaith " the ſoul, under the diſcovery of this love, *Shall I thus* " *requite the Lord? Is this my kindneſs to my friend?* " Shall I fight againſt infinite love? And ſpurn againſt " the bowels of divine pity and compaſſion, yerning to- " wards me? Shall he conſult my welfare, and I con- " ſult his diſhonour? *O? tell it not in Gath.* Shall I " harbour his enemies within me, when in loving-kind- " neſs he hath revealed his Son in me? Shall I wear " arms of fleſh and blood to fight againſt him? And " entertain ſuch a devil of enmity againſt ſuch a God " of love?" Theſe are the reaſonings of faith: and this is the moral argumentative influence, that the revelation of Chriſt hath, for preventing carnal conſultation.

(2.) The ſaving revelation of Chriſt hath a *phyſical operative* influence upon the prevention of this conſultation with fleſh and blood: for the revelation of Chriſt doth not only ſtrenuouſly urge and preſs, but powerfully conquer and overcome the ſoul, ſo as to deliver it from conſulting with fleſh and blood: according to the meaſure of the ſaving revelation of Chriſt, accordingly is the ſoul transformed; *Beholding as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the ſame image*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. And ſurely, the more of God's image any hath, the leſs conſulting with God's enemies.

Now, that this *phyſical operative* influence may the more evidently appear, conſider a little, in ſome particulars, what it is that this internal revelation of Chriſt doth powerfully work and effectuate; for, the Spirit of

of power reveals Chriſt in the ſoul, and you will ſee how it cannot but natively work out all carnal conſultation.

1. This revelation of Chriſt works *faith;* for they that know his name, cannot but put their truſt in him: they that ſee the Son, they believe in him: *He manifeſted forth his glory, and the diſciples believed in him.* And this *faith purifies the heart;* and conſequently, according to the meaſure thereof, cleanſeth from carnality: and now the man walks by faith, and ſo cannot walk by carnal reaſon, which is faith's greateſt oppoſite and antipode. The revelation of Chriſt daſhes unbelief quite out of countenance. Now, this unbelief is the main root of carnal conſultation, the main cauſe of conſulting with fleſh and blood. This revelation of Chriſt then ſtrikes at the root of the diſeaſe: for the man's eyes are opened to *ſee the King in his beauty;* and ſo the power of this fatal plague is checked.—— While unbelief prevails, fleſh and blood prevails, ſaying, *Except I ſee the print of the nails, and thruſt my hand into his ſide, I cannot believe:* but whenever Chriſt appears, unbelief is put to the bluſh; and faith cries out, *My Lord, and my God.*

2. This revelation of Chriſt works *love:* they that ſee him cannot but love him, though they ſee him not with the bodily eye; *Whom having not ſeen we love.*— Yea, this revelation of Chriſt fills the ſoul with ardent love to Chriſt, and ſuch as many waters cannot quench: and this *love is ſtrong as death;* it is ſtronger than fleſh and blood. The revelation of Chriſt breaks the power of natural enmity; *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God.* Paul goes to Damaſcus, full freighted with prejudice and enmity againſt Chriſt: but getting a ſight of Chriſt, a revelation of Chriſt in him, the arms of rebellion dropt out of his hand; and he is made to cry out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Yea, it will raiſe the affections to ſuch a pitch, as will make Chriſt preferable to all the glory of heaven and earth; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in all the earth that I deſire beſides thee.* A ſaving ſight of Chriſt doth lay him open to our view, as one *in whom is all*

the fulneſs of the Godhead; and *out of whoſe fulneſs we may receive grace for grace:* and this breaks up the conference with fleſh and blood; for true love will admit no rival, no competitor.

3. This revelation of Chriſt works *humility:* when the ſoul ſees him, then, with Job, the man *abhors himſelf, and repents in duſt and in aſhes.* A ſight of Chriſt doth ſink the ſoul into the loweſt pit of ſelf-annihilation, ſelf-abhorrence, and ſelf-deteſtation: and when once the power of ſelf-confidence is broken, in as much as the man hath no confidence in the fleſh, in his own ſelf-ſufficiency, ſelf-righteouſneſs, ſelf-wiſdom, ſelf-will, then one of the ſtrongeſt holds of fleſh and blood is broken down. The day of the revelation of Chriſt, is the day wherein ſelf is ſentenced to death, that Chriſt may live and reign by faith in the ſoul; like that, 2 Cor. i. 9. *We had the ſentence of death in ourſelves, that we ſhould not truſt in ourſelves, but in God, which raiſeth the dead:* intimating, that when, by whatever mean, ſelf-confidence is broken, then the man is brought to confidence in the Lord. Now, when by the revelation of Chriſt, ſelf is abaſed, then conſulting with fleſh and blood, is turned to confidence in the Lord alone.

4. This revelation of Chriſt works *zeal;* true zeal for God and his glory, for Chriſt and his honour; and true zeal againſt every falſe way. Many have a *zeal for God,* but not *according to knowledge:* but this revelation of Chriſt, bringing in the ſaving knowledge of him, makes zeal regular and right, being according to knowledge: and this zeal will lead the ſoul to do and ſuffer for Chriſt, maugre all the arguments of fleſh and blood to the contrary. Where there is no revelation of Chriſt, there is no true zeal for him: where faint revelation, faint zeal; where clear and full revelation, great zeal: and where great zeal takes place, fleſh and blood are burnt in the flame thereof; for then the *man takes joyfully the ſpoiling of his goods.* None of theſe things move him; neither *counts* he *his life dear unto himſelf,* ſo that he may *finiſh his courſe with joy.* Hence,

5. This

5. This revelation of Chriſt works *joy* in the heart; *In whom believing we rejoice, with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* The revelation of Chriſt brings gladneſs into the ſoul; *Then were the diſciples glad, when they ſaw the Lord.* O but a ſight of Chriſt is a gladening joyful ſight: *Abraham rejoiced to ſee my day afar off, and he ſaw it, and was glad. I will ſee you again,* ſaith Chriſt, John xvi. 22. *and your heart ſhall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.* Now, this *joy of the Lord is their ſtrength,* Neh. viii. 10. And ſurely the more ſtrong in the Lord that they are, the leſs confidence in fleſh and blood will take place.——A ſight of Chriſt is a heart-ſtrengthening, grace-ſtrengthening thing: and the ſtronger that the new man is, the weaker is the old man. The Dagon of fleſh and blood falls before the Ark of God.

6. This revelation of Chriſt creates *contempt of the world,* and of all that is in the world; *The luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eye, and the pride of life;* and this prevents all conſultation with fleſh and blood. The internal revelation of Chriſt, will eclipſe and darken the beauty and glory of the world, and all things therein. Love of the world makes men to conſult with fleſh and blood; and Demas-like to forſake Chriſt, even after a conſiderable time's profeſſion of him openly: but now, when Chriſt appeareth, the glory of the world diſappears; and the man is content to forſake all, and follow the Lamb; counting all but loſs and dung for him; yea, ſelling his all to buy the pearl. The internal revelation of Chriſt doth effectually looſe the heart from all luſts and idols: ſee Iſaiah xlix. 29. and xlii. 1. compared.——It makes the man cry out, with Ephraim, *What have I any more to do with idols?* As the ſtars evaniſh upon the appearance of the ſun; ſo doth the world, and the luſts thereof, upon the riſing of the Sun of righteouſneſs, and our beholding thereof: and as it diſengages from idols, ſo it effectually engages the heart to himſelf; yea, the man is content to engage ten thouſand hearts, if he had them, to the Lord:—and thus he is delivered from conſulting with fleſh and blood.

7. In a word, The revelation of Chriſt doth effectually diſpel the maſſy clouds of *ſpiritual darkneſs* and *ignorance*, that ſit hard and heavy upon the eyes of our underſtanding, whereby a man is buried under the mud of fleſh and blood, and prejudices againſt Chriſt are fomented. It is ſaid of the Jews, *If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory:* even ſo, if we knew Chriſt, we would not conſult with his enemies, or confer with fleſh and blood. When Chriſt is revealed, then the man is in the light, and ſees about him: the revelation of Chriſt diſcovers the ſubtilty of Satan, the deceitfulneſs of the heart, and the ſophiſtry of carnal reaſon; and daſhes down Satan's ſtrong holds; *For Chriſt is manifeſted to deſtroy the works of the devil.*——Thus you ſee what influence, both moral and phyſical, both argumentative and operative, this revelation of Chriſt hath, for preventing this ſin of conferring with fleſh and blood; and how neceſſary a ſaving ſight of Chriſt is, for attaining this end.

2*dly*, The *ſecond* mean was, his ſpeedy *rejecting* the counſel of fleſh and blood; *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.* And this *immediately* ſeems to import theſe four things.

1. That before this time the *ſet* and *diſpoſition* of his heart was carnal: why, *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh.* While he was in a ſtate of unregeneracy, he was wholly under the conduct of fleſh and blood: even when he was *touching the righteouſneſs of the law, blameleſs:* and *profiting in the Jews religion above many his equals, in his own nation;* yet for all that time, he now ſees that he was but a proud Phariſee: yea, he put himſelf among the number of theſe that were *fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, hateful, and hating one another*, Titus iii. 3. When converting grace took hold of him, then he underſtood what a fool he had been before converſion; and how much he had been under the conduct of carnal ſenſe and reaſon: but now when Chriſt was revealed in him, immediately he conferred not with fleſh and blood, as he had always done before.

2. It

2. It imports, that, upon the revelation of Chriſt, a *change* was inſtantly wrought, from a carnal to a ſpiritual diſpoſition; *Beholding the glory of the Lord, he was changed* immediately.——No ſooner doth the ſun ſhine upon a man, than light and heat is conveyed with the beams thereof: and thus, no ſooner is Chriſt ſavingly revealed, than the ſoul is enlightened, warmed, transformed, and ſpiritualized: the new light and ſaving ſight brings in a new quality and diſpoſition, at the ſame time.——In order of nature, the revelation of Chriſt is firſt; but in order of time, no ſooner is the revelation given, but the ſpiritual diſpoſition is wrought; for, *the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt*, doth enter into the man, and brings grace with him.

3. It imports, that this ſpiritual diſpoſition was inſtantly put in *exerciſe: Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.* He got not a new diſpoſition to ly dormant, like a ſleeping habit, without any vigour and activity: but whenever he got grace implanted, he ſtirred up the ſame to a holy exerciſe. True holineſs is not only paſſive, in the principle and habit, but active; and that both internally, in the exerciſe of grace; and externally, in the performance of duty. The apoſtle was *in haſte*, like David; in that holy haſte, mentioned Pſalm cxix. 60. *I made haſte and delayed not, to keep thy commandments;* thus did the apoſtle, upon his firſt illumination: *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*

4. It imports, that now he was in the ſtraight way of *duty;* whereas formerly he was in a crooked way.—For the word here in the original εὐθέως rendered *immediately*, comes from another that ſignifies *ſtraight;* and is ſo rendered, Mat. iii. 3. *Make his paths ſtraight.* And the adverb of the ſame nature, is rendered *ſtraightway*, Mat. iii. 16. *He went up ſtraightway out of the water:* and now, compare the noun, which ſignifies *ſtraight*, and the adverb, which ſignifies *immediately* or *ſtraightway;* comparing them, I ſay, together, we may turn the adverb into the ſenſe of the noun, and ſee this leſſon in it, namely, that to do what is *right ſtraightway*,

way, is to take the *ſtraight way* of doing it; whereas, to delay what is right, and what ought to be done inſtantly, and not to do it ſtraightway, is ſo far a going out of the ſtraight way. He that delays to do good, and to do what the Lord calls him to, and doth it not ſtraightway, he is not walking in the ſtraight way of duty: but Paul delayed not at this rate; *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood*; he inſtantly and ſpeedily rejected the counſel of fleſh and blood. They that would not conſult with fleſh and blood, had need to take care that they do not ſtand to parley with the temptation: for, when a man enters upon ſpeaking terms with carnal reaſon, and doth not immediately reject its ſolicitations, he is in danger to be drawn aſide therewith. Eve parlied with the temptation; and ſo was overcome: ſo did Samſon; and was conquered; ſo did David; and he was vanquiſhed. Peter's fall alſo diſcovered the danger of parlying with the temptation; he entered upon the conſultation with fleſh and blood, when he expreſſed his confidence in himſelf, ſaying, *Though all men forſake thee, yet will not I*: next he entered into the judgment-hall; and upon his being firſt attacked, fleſh and blood ſuggeſted fears of death, from one ſtep he goes on to another, in conferring with fleſh and blood: and then he is overcome ſo far, as to ſway with the time, in curſing and ſwearing, and denying his Maſter. The ſuggeſtions of carnal reaſon, of fleſh and blood, are to be rejected at their firſt appearance: the cockatrice muſt be cruſhed in the ſhell; and the firſt motions of fleſh and blood muſt be abhorred, otherwiſe danger is at hand: thus did Paul here; *Immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*——Thus much for the import of this, *immediately*.

Now I would offer ſome corollaries from the doctrine, in this complex view, *That the revelation of Chriſt is the beſt preſervative, againſt conſulting with fleſh and blood*. Hence ſee,

1. Whence it is, that a *world of mankind* are living wholly under the conduct of fleſh and blood, and corrupt

rupt carnal reaſon; even becauſe they are ſtrangers to Chriſt: Chriſt was never revealed in them. Ignorance of Chriſt is at the root of all that profanity and ungodlineſs, that bears ſuch a ſway in the world: why doth the drunkard continue in his drunkenneſs? the whoremonger in his whoredom? the hypocrite in his hypocriſy? and every wicked man in his wickedneſs? And what is the reaſon of all the laxneſs, looſeneſs, and laſciviouſneſs of our day? Why, it is ignorance of Chriſt: Chriſt, in his perſon, and offices, hath never been revealed in them; they are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge; the god of this world hath blinded their eyes. As Chriſt ſaid to the Sadduccees, *Ye err, not knowing the ſcriptures:* ſo ſay I of ſuch, they err in principle and practice, not knowing Chriſt, nor the glory of God in him; for, if they beheld his glory they would be changed.

2. See whence it is that people, who enjoy a clear goſpel-revelation, may yet be under the *conduct* of fleſh and blood; why, Chriſt is revealed *to* them, but not *in* them: while people have only the external objective revelation of Chriſt to them, without the internal ſubjective revelation of Chriſt in them, all their knowledge and common illumination, hath not ſo much power and virtue, as to deliver them from their carnal biaſs: the goſpel comes to them in word only, not in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt. Hence many live under the goſpel, and have attained a meaſure of the knowledge of Chriſt; and perhaps have, through the knowledge of Chriſt, eſcaped many pollutions of the world's luſts; and yet are never delivered from the power and dominion of this evil, of conſulting with fleſh and blood; carnal eaſe, carnal reaſon, carnal intereſt, carnal pleaſure reigns over them, and leads all the faculties of their ſoul into ſubjection: why, Chriſt, who is revealed to them by the word, was never revealed in them by the Spirit: they reſt ſatisfied without the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt.

3. See whence it is, that ſo many of the *truly godly*, do ſo much conſult with fleſh and blood, at this day; and give ſo much way to carnal reaſon, in the matters

of

of God; it flows from this, even on the one hand, *partial ignorance* of Chriſt, or the *ſmall meaſure* of the knowledge of him: though Chriſt be revealed in them, yet it is but very darkly; and perhaps the impreſſion that the firſt revelation of Chriſt made upon them, much obliterated by their defection, in leaving their firſt love, and little growth in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: whereas growth therein, and clearer views of his glory, would advance their mortification of fleſh and blood. It flows alſo from this, on the other hand, their not taking Paul's courſe, in rejecting ſpeedily the ſuggeſtions of fleſh and blood; upon the back of the manifeſtation of Chriſt, immediately he rejects the conference with them. Whereas, if this courſe be not followed, tho' a man ſhould get a ſaving manifeſtation of Chriſt, if upon the back of it, he ſtand parlying with the tempter, and dallying with the temptation, he is in danger, as in the caſe of Peter, who inſtantly after a manifeſtation, ran into the camp of fleſh and blood; yea, the camp of Satan, Matth. xvi. 17. compared with ver. 22, 23. Though manifeſtations are of a transforming nature; yet if a child of God give up his watch, and turn ſecure, after Chriſt is revealed to him and in him, fleſh and blood may trip up his heels very quickly.

4. Hence ſee, what is God's method of *ſanctifying* an elect ſoul, and carrying on the work of ſanctification in the believing ſoul: his method is firſt to reveal Chriſt, and ſo, by diſcovering his glory, to change and transform the ſoul: having convinced the man of his ſin and miſery, he then enlightens his mind in the knowledge of Chriſt: and this ſaving illumination carries the will and affections towards the Lord; and the man, being renewed after the image of God, is enabled, by the means of more and more illumination, in the knowledge of Chriſt, to die unto ſin, to mortify the deeds of the body, and to live unto God; conſulting with him, and not with fleſh and blood.—— Many, at this day, diſcover their ignorance of God's method of converting ſouls, and ſanctifying of ſinners, by

by magnifying the maxims of morality; and ſuppoſing, as if the mere preaching of moral duty was enough to make men holy: but to reveal Chriſt for that end, and harp upon this theme, they cannot think this is adapted for ſuch a purpoſe. But my text and doctrine ſhews, that it is the revelation of Chriſt that works true ſanctification: *He revealed his Son in me:* and then, *immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.* The knowledge of the law will not do it; the knowledge of all moral ſyſtems will not do it: but the internal knowledge of Chriſt will effectuate it.

5. Hence ſee, the *excellency* and *neceſſity* of the *knowledge* of Chriſt, and of the goſpel: when once Paul came to this knowledge, he counted all but *loſs and dung, in compariſon of the excellency* of it. And how neceſſary it is, is evident in this, that there is no ſanctification without it; no freedom from carnal courſes and conſultations without it. The goſpel is the revelation of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs; and, as ſuch, it is the *power of God to ſalvation*; and *the power of God to ſanctification*, Rom. i. 16, 17. It is the organical power of God unto ſalvation from ſin; becauſe therein is revealed the *righteouſneſs of God*, even Chriſt, who is the Lord our righteouſneſs, *from faith to faith.* No wonder that fleſh and blood, or men that are in the fleſh, think the goſpel needleſs, and cannot endure that Chriſt ſhould be the miniſter's habitual theme: for the revelation of Chriſt is the greateſt enemy to, and the ſtrongeſt battering-ram, to bring down the walls of it; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds; caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Fleſh and blood oppoſes the goſpel and the revelation of Chriſt, becauſe when Chriſt is once revealed, immediately the man conferreth not with fleſh and blood.

6. Hence ſee, how *ignorantly* men ſuſpect the *goſpel of God's grace*, as a *nurſe of licentiouſneſs*, and an *enemy to the holineſs* required in the law: for the quite con-

trary is the truth. That ignorance of Chriſt, and his goſpel, is the root of all carnality: and the knowledge of Chriſt, and the goſpel, in a ſaving way, is the root upon which true holineſs and piety doth grow. The preaching of Chriſt was Paul's work, as you ſee in the boſom of this text; *He revealed his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles:* he was revealed to me, that I might reveal him unto others; and might be the inſtrument of their converſion and ſanctification thereby; as I myſelf was ſanctified by this mean.— To preach duty, without Chriſt, is the way to make moraliſts: to preach duty, before Chriſt, and more than Chriſt, or in order to Chriſt, and to make men Chriſtians, is the way to make them legaliſts; and to make the world think they can be religious without Chriſt, and that a good moral life will bring them to heaven: but true goſpel preaching lies in preaching Chriſt in order to duty; it is to preach Chriſt in order to holineſs, and ſo to preach duty in preaching Chriſt: for, till Chriſt be revealed in us, there is no true holineſs, no freedom from conſulting with fleſh and blood.

7. Hence ſee what it is, that contributes to make a *corrupt miniſtry* in a church: why, Chriſt is not revealed in all that profeſs to preach him among the Gentiles; and therefore they never ſtand to conſult with fleſh and blood. What is it that qualifies a man for the miniſterial work? Here is the beſt qualification, when Chriſt is revealed in him, for this end, that he may *preach him among the Gentiles:* whom God ſends, he thus qualifies, according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt. But many run without being ſent; and, as the Athenians worſhipped an unknown God, ſo they preach an unknown Chriſt; which is very melancholy work, and can have little ſucceſs: yea, the want of the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt in ſuch, lays a foundation for doctrinal error and practical error both, while they want the main preſervative, againſt the conſulting with fleſh and blood. Some are wholly corrupt, becauſe wholly deſtitute of the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt; and ſo the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government of Chriſt's houſe cannot be long ſafe and free from

from corruption among their hands; eſpecially if they, by reaſon of their gifts, parts, and authority in the church, bear a conſiderable ſway therein. Others are tainted with corruption, though truly gracious, and carried down with the ſtream of carnal conſultation, while any ſaving knowledge of Chriſt that they have is ſo ſmall, that fleſh and blood hath the aſcendant; or, if their knowledge of Chriſt be great in one reſpect, yet it is defective in other reſpects. So Peter, for example, he was greatly enlightened in the knowledge of Chriſt, as the *Son* of the living God; a moſt glorious fundamental article of faith, Matth. xvi. 16.; but yet his knowledge of Chriſt was defective, and exceeding dark concerning Chriſt as a *ſacrifice*, a ranſom: and hence he takes upon him, forſooth, to reprove Chriſt, when he ſpoke of his ſuffering at Jeruſalem, ver. 22. ſaying, *Be it far from thee, Lord; this ſhall not be done unto thee:* for which Chriſt calls him a devil, ſaying, *Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men.* Though he was extraordinarily enlightened in the knowledge Chriſt, in one reſpect; yet he was extremely ignorant of Chriſt, in another reſpect: and hence in that matter favoured of fleſh and blood, and conſulted with carnal eaſe, and carnal reaſon, under colour of zeal for his Maſter's ſafety and honour. Hence we will find ſuch corruptions creeping into the church of Chriſt, both among good and bad: ſo that we may ſee perſonal credit, acting under the colour of zeal for God. Men will pretend zeal for God's honour, the credit of the miniſtry, the honour of ordinances; and vent themſelves hotly and tenaciouſly, under this view, while yet it is perſonal credit, reputation, and applauſe that is acting under that covert, and hiding under that maſk.—Thus the diſciples ſought to be avenged on the place, that would not receive Chriſt, by fire from heaven: why, it ſeemed to be zeal for their Maſter's honour that ſwayed them; but perſonal credit was their motive; and they were not under the conduct of God's Spirit, but of their own fleſh and blood: therefore ſaith

Chriſt, *Ye know not what Spirit ye are of*, Luke ix. 54. See alſo ver. 59.

8. Hence ſee, what is the *beſt antidote againſt corruption*, both in miniſters and people; and the beſt antidote againſt the power of corruption, in any particular perſon: it is even a transforming revelation of Chriſt. A day of power is neceſſary for this end, making a diſplay of God's power and glory in the ſanctuary.—When *God builds up Zion*, he will *appear in his glory:* and there is no hopes of getting evil amended, till the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Chriſt, be poured out. And therefore we ſhould be at no reſt; yea, ſhould give God no reſt till he ſend the Spirit, Iſaiah lxii. 6, 7. O cry with the pſalmiſt, ſaying, *O ſend forth thy light and thy truth.*—— And with Moſes, *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory:* that ſo, *beholding the glory of the Lord*, we may be *changed into the ſame image:* and that each of us, for our own part, may have it to ſay with Paul here, *It pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me; and immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood.*

SERMON

SERMON XXIII,---XXVII.

LAW-DEATH, GOSPEL-LIFE; or, the Death of *Legal Righteouſneſs*, the Life of *Goſpel Holineſs**.

GALATIANS ii. 19.

I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

A GODLY life is what we are all obliged to live, eſpecially if we have been at the Lord's table; but it is a myſtery that very few underſtand in their experience, if they will judge their experiences, by comparing them with this of Paul in our text, *I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.*

Our apoſtle, in this epiſtle, is vindicating himſelf from the baſe aſperſions caſt upon him by the falſe apoſtles; with reſpect to his *calling*, as if he had been no apoſtle; and with reſpect to his *doctrine*, as if it had been falſe and erroneous. From the beginning of this chapter, to ver. 11. he tells us what he did at Jeruſalem; how ſtrenuouſly he oppoſed the falſe brethren, that he might maintain the truth of the goſpel, which they ſought to overturn. From the 11th ver. to the 17th, the apoſtle tells us what he did at Antioch; how

* This was the ſubſtance of four Diſcourſes, the firſt two whereof were delivered upon the adminiſtration of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, at Carnock; the other two were an enlargement upon the ſame ſubject, on an occaſion of the ſame nature, at Orwel.——The preciſe time when theſe diſcourſes were delivered, cannot be poſitively aſcertained; however, from ſome paſſages in the diſcourſes themſelves, it is probable they were preached ſome time in the year 1724, and the firſt edition being printed that year, ſeems to determine it.—They have now undergone four impreſſions.

zealouſly

zealouſly he oppoſed and reproved even Peter himſelf, for his diſſimulation, in compelling the Gentiles to Judaize; giving thereby ſuch offence, that the Jews were confirmed in their Judaiſm, ver. 12th. *Other Jews diſſembled with him, and Barnabas alſo was carried away with their diſſimulation;* and hereby occaſion was given both to Jews and Gentiles, to deſert Chriſt, to deny grace, to return to the law, and ſeek juſtification by the works thereof. So that we may ſee here, that great and good men may diſſemble, and do much hurt by their diſſimulation, both among miniſters and people. We have here a wonderful example of it in the greateſt of men, and ſuch as were pillars of the church; but it would ſeem that Peter and Barnabas, and other Jews here, did not ſee their fault and ſin, but thought they did right enough; but Paul ſaw it, verſe 14. *When I ſaw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the goſpel*, &c. This might ſeem a very bold and impudent attempt, for Paul, the youngeſt *of all the apoſtles*, (I mean, of whom Chriſt was *laſt ſeen, as of one born out of due time*) for him to take upon him to accuſe and condemn Peter as well as Barnabas, and the Jews for their practical error, not *walking according to the truth of the goſpel.* But we ſee, that as people may have the goſpel, but not the truth of the goſpel; ſo theſe that have the truth of the goſpel, may be guilty of not walking according to the truth of it, even as Peter, Barnabas, and others here, whoſe diſſimulation did not conſiſt with the *truth of the goſpel*, which they preached, but tended to *eſtabliſh the law*, and ſo to overturn the goſpel. But God hath ſometimes very few witneſſes to ſtand up for the truth of the goſpel: here Paul was alone, Peter was againſt him; and Barnabas, his own intimate aſſociate, was drawn away with the diſſimulation; Jews and Gentiles were infected, and therefore Paul alone muſt fight againſt them all, for the cauſe of Chriſt, and the doctrine of the goſpel, which was endangered. *I ſaid unto Peter before them all*, &c. Not by teaching of any *erroneous doctrine* did Peter err, for that is a principle we maintain, that the apoſtles never erred in teaching,

or

or in their doctrine delivered to the church; but his error was in *practice*, compelling the Gentiles to Judaize; whereby he gave them occaſion to think, that the obſervation of the law was neceſſary to juſtification: whereas he adds, *We that are Jews by nature*, ver. 15, 16. We apoſtles, might he ſay, though Jews by nature, yet we ſeek not juſtification by the works of the law; and therefore we ought not to drive the Gentiles to the obſervation of the law, that they may ſeek righteouſneſs and juſtification thereby. Why? becauſe, 1. We know that a man cannot be juſtified by the *works of the law*, but by the *faith of Chriſt*. 2. Becauſe therefore having renounced the law, in point of juſtification, we have embraced Chriſt by faith; that through him we may be juſtified. 3. Becauſe *by the deeds of the law no fleſh can be juſtified.*

Now, from verſe 17. and downward, the apoſtle returns to the Galatians; having told how he reproved Peter, and what he ſaid to him concerning juſtification without the works of the law, he now comes to ſhew this doctrine to be no wiſe oppoſite to the doctrine of ſanctification, but of abſolute neceſſity to true holineſs, ver. 17, 18. *q. d.* If we Jews, who lived formerly under the law, and now ſeek righteouſneſs in Chriſt alone, are thus accounted as ſinners, when we followed the law, it would ſeem that Chriſt did diſapprove the law, and approve ſin: *God forbid*, ſays the apoſtle; this he denies and rejects with abhorrence.—— To object thus, might he ſay, againſt the doctrine of free juſtification, were egregious blaſphemy againſt the Son of God, as if he were the miniſter of ſin, who came to deſtroy ſin, and to deſtroy the works of the devil; and by this goſpel which I preach, might he ſay, Chriſt is held out as the *Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the world;* not to take away righteouſneſs, truly ſo called, unleſs it be that falſe vizard of legal ſelf-righteouſneſs, with which we formerly covered and maſked ourſelves: nay, he came to bring in *everlaſting righteouſneſs*, a true and perfect righteouſneſs for juſtification; he came to make an *end of ſin*,

by

by the ſacrifice of himſelf, and thereby to purchaſe the Spirit, as a Spirit of holineſs and ſanctification, to deſtroy the power of ſin and corruption; and therefore it is a baſe calumny to ſay, that this goſpel-doctrine does open the door to ſin and licentiouſneſs: this he proves by two arguments; 1. Becauſe the faith of Chriſt does not deſtroy *itſelf*, verſe 18. *I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.* Sin is like an old houſe, which I have razed and deſtroyed, by my doctrine of free juſtification by faith, and not by works of the law; for by this doctrine I preached freedom from ſin through Chriſt; and therefore, if I ſhould build up theſe old waſtes of ſin again, it is not Chriſt, but I that would be the ſinner, or miniſter of ſin; nay, I would be a madman, to build with one hand what I deſtroyed with the other. 2. Becauſe liberty to ſin is contrary to the very *ſcope of the goſpel*, and to the deſign of this doctrine of juſtification by faith without the works of the law: *For, I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God*, verſe 19.

This is a very ſtrange and wonderful text, that fleſh and blood can hardly hear, without ſuſpecting, that it favours too much of a *new ſcheme* of doctrine: and if it were not the divinely inſpired words of the apoſtle, it would hardly eſcape being taxed as an Antinomian paradox. I remember, Luther upon the text, ſays, "The falſe apoſtles taught, unleſs you live to the "law, you cannot live to God;" and therefore Paul here muſt be the moſt heretical of all heretics; his hereſy is unheard-of hereſy, reaſon and human wiſdom cannot receive it, that if we will live to God, we muſt be dead wholly to the law: yet ſo it is here, he declares it of himſelf, and in the name of all believers in Chriſt, yea, as the very doctrine of faith, *I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.*

In which words you may notice two remarkably different things, *death* and *life;* mortification and vivification. 1. A wonderful DEATH; *I through the law am* DEAD *to the law.* 2. A remarkable LIFE, proceeding out of that death: *That I might* LIVE *unto God.*

1*ſt*, You

1ſt, You have a wonderful DEATH, or Paul's ſtrange mortification; *I through the law am* DEAD *to the law:* and of this mortification we have here three things; 1. The general *nature* of it, it is called a *death; I am dead.* 2. The *object* of it, *the law.* 3. The *means* of it, *the law; I through the law am dead to the law*, all very odd things to carnal reaſon.

1. The general *nature* of it, it is called a DEATH; *I am* DEAD. There are ſeveral ſorts of death commonly ſpoken of, *viz.* temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal; but this is none of them. Temporal death is a ſeparation betwixt ſoul and body; but this death takes place where there is no ſuch ſeparation: Paul was thus alive, when he ſaid here, *I am dead.* Spiritual death is a ſeparation betwixt God and the ſoul; but this death is a mean of joining God and the ſoul together. Eternal death, is an eternal ſeparation betwixt God and the ſoul; but the death here ſpoken of, makes way for eternal communion with God.——This is a ſtrange death, a ſtrange mortification; eſpecially if you conſider,

2. The *object* of it, the LAW; *I am dead to the law:* not only the ceremonial law, but even the moral law itſelf, as under the form of a covenant of works, and as a condition of life. I renounce, might he ſay, the righteouſneſs of the law, ſeeking no ſalvation in the works thereof; nay, in this reſpect it is dead to me, and I to it; it cannot ſave me, and I cannot expect ſalvation by it; nay, *I am dead to the law.* To be *dead to ſin*, is a mortification that people may think they can eaſily underſtand; but the myſtery of it, in being dead to ſin, by this mean of being dead to the law, is what cannot be ſo well underſtood; for one would think, that to die to the law, were to live in ſin: nay, ſays the apoſtle, it is quite otherwiſe; that I may die to ſin, *I am dead to the law.*

3. You have the *means* of this death, which is as ſtrange, namely, *the law; I through the law am dead to the law.* As to this *mean* of death to the law, *viz.* THE LAW, I find ſome divines underſtand it a different law from the other; as if the apoſtle ſhould ſay,

"I by the law of Chriſt, am freed from the law of "Moſes; or, I by the law of faith am freed from the "law of works." But I incline to join with the current of ſound divines, who underſtand both of the ſame law, *q. d. I am dead to the law*, THROUGH *the law:* the law hath taught me that I am a ſinner, that cannot be juſtified by the law, which curſes and condemns ſinners: *By the law is the knowledge of ſin;* and having thus by the law known myſelf to be a guilty wretch, I am dead to all expectation of righteouſneſs by the law. The law then, having thus killed me, and all my hope of life by it, hath been a bleſt mean of drawing me out of myſelf, and all my legal righteouſneſs, to ſeek life and juſtification in Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs received by faith. Thus you have a wonderful death here ſpoken of.

2*dly*, You have a remarkable LIFE proceeding out of that *death:* you may call it Paul's vivification, which was not peculiar to him, but is common to all believers: *That I might live unto God.* Where again you may notice three things.

1. The *general nature* of this vivification, it is called by the name of *life:* while a man is alive to the law, he continues dead; but whenever he is dead to the law, then he is alive; the breath of life is breathed into his noſtrils, and he becomes a living ſoul: for the Spirit of God, the ſpirit of life enters into him.

2. The *object* of this life, or vivification, it is *God;* a living unto God, that is, a new life, a holy life, a divine life; a living to God, to God's honour, to God's glory. Before this, the man lived *to himſelf* as his *end*, as well as *from himſelf* as his *principle;* but now he lives from God as his principle, and to God as his end, which only is a holy life, and wherein true ſanctification lies.

3. You have the *influence* that this death hath upon this life, or this mortification hath upon this vivification; or, the influence that juſtification by faith alone, and not by the deeds of the law, hath upon ſanctification of heart and life, or living to God, in the particle *that: I am dead to the law*, THAT *I might live unto*

unto God. Now, might the apoſtle ſay, How falſely do you charge my doctrine, as opening a window to licentiouſneſs, while I in the name of all believers declare, that this doctrine of juſtification by faith alone, or our being dead to the law in point of juſtification, does open the door to true holineſs; for none can live unto God, till they be dead to the law. *I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.* But I ſhall endeavour further to explain the words upon the following obſervation.

DOCT. *That to be dead to the law, in the point of juſtification, is neceſſary in order to our living unto God in point of ſanctification.* I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

Now, upon this doctrine, I ſhall endeavour, through grace, to explain the ſeveral branches of the text; and the general method ſhall be.

I. To *clear* and *confirm* the doctrine.
II. To ſpeak of the *believer's* DEATH, or *mortification*, here intended; *I through the law am dead to the law.*
III. To ſpeak of the *believer's* LIFE, or *vivification*; his living unto God.
IV. Of the *neceſſity* of this death in order to this life; or the *influence* that our being dead to the law hath upon our living unto God.
V. Make ſome *application* of the ſubject in ſundry *uſes.*

I. To *clear* and *confirm* the doctrine; *At the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word ſhall be eſtabliſhed.* But, to ſhew that we are not ſtraitened to find out witneſſes to atteſt the truth of this doctrine, I ſhall produce more than two or three.

The *firſt* witneſs that I cite, is that, Rom. vii. 4, 5, 6. where you ſee, that to be *dead to the law*, and *married to Chriſt*, is neceſſary in order to *living unto God*, bring-

bringing forth fruit to him, and *ſerving him in newneſs of ſpirit.*

The *ſecond* witneſs I cite, is very like to this, Iſa. liv. 1, 5. compared, *Sing, O barren, that did not bear.*—— *For more are the children of the deſolate,* [Gentiles,] *than the children of the married wife*: Why? ver. 5. *Thy Maker is thy huſband.* Being dead to the law, and divorced from it, and married to Chriſt, the barren woman becomes a fruitful bride. And, leſt your ſhould think I put a wrong gloſs upon this text, and miſtake the meaning of it, you may compare it with,

A *third* witneſs that I cite, whereby this very gloſs that I give it is confirmed, Gal. iv. 27. *For it is written, Rejoice thou barren that beareſt not; break forth and cry, thou that travaileſt not: for the deſolate hath many more children than ſhe which hath an huſband.* Now, we would conſider what is the ſubject here ſpoken of: the apoſtle is ſetting forth believers freedom from the law by the goſpel, or their juſtification by faith without the works of the law; and he confirms it by an allegory, ſhewing, that our liberty from the law was prefigured in the family of Abraham, that we are not *children of the bond-woman*, or bond-men to the law, but *children of the promiſe, as Iſaac*; And the apoſtle explains the prophet, and ſhews his allegory to be founded, not only on the former hiſtorical, but alſo on this prophetical ſcripture. The goſpel-church, including all believers among Jews and Gentiles, is called the *bride, the Lamb's wife*: and as this bride in general, being divorced from the law and married to Chriſt, is a fruitful bride, bearing many children, many ſons and daughters to Chriſt, and more under the new diſpenſation of the covenant of grace, than under the old legal adminiſtation thereof before Chriſt's coming; ſo every particular believer, being dead to the law, and married to Chriſt, is, by this means, fruitful in bringing forth the *fruit of holineſs and righteouſneſs*, to the glory of God; as the apoſtle in proſecuttug this diſcourſe, further ſhews, ver. 30. *Caſt out the bond-woman and her ſon.* Strange! that the law ſhould be called a *bond-woman*; and then, *Caſt out the bond-woman*; this

was

was ſtrange language; nay, but in the caſe of juſtification, "Moſes and his tables muſt give place to "Chriſt," as Luther ſays: yea, he adds in this ſenſe, "I will ſay to thee, O law, be gone; and if it will not "be gone, thruſt it out by force; *Caſt out the bond-wo-*"*man.*" Further, the apoſtle adds, chap. v. 1. *Stand faſt, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Read alſo, ver. 4, 5, 6. where you ſee, that the believer, being free from the law, and having the ſpirit of life, and the ſpirit of faith, bringing forth fruit to God; of which fruits of the Spirit of Chriſt, in oppoſition to the fruits of the fleſh, you read, ver. 16, 17. and downward.

The *fourth* witneſs that I cite, is, Coloſ. ii. 13, 14. *You being dead in your ſins,—hath he quickened.* Now, by what means does this quickening, or being made alive to God, come about? It is by the *blotting out of the hand-writing—nailing it to his croſs;* intimating, that there is no living unto God, without being dead to the law, and having the law dead to us, by viewing it crucified with Chriſt, and nailed to his croſs.

The *fifth* witneſs is, Coloſ. iii. 3, 4, 5. *For ye are dead,* [that is, dead to the law, as he had cleared before, and ſo dead to ſin, ſelf, and the world,] *and your life is hid with Chriſt in God; and when Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.* The believer is ſaid to be *dead with Chriſt,* ver. 20. of the preceeding chapter, and ſo dead to the law, which was *nailed to the croſs of Chriſt.* And ver. 1. of this chapter, the believer is ſaid to be *riſen with Chriſt,* and ſo he ſits together with Chriſt in heavenly places: but though his beſt part is above, even his glorious Head, whom he will follow; yet he hath members on earth, which he is called to mortify; which mortification of ſin is, you ſee, the native fruit of his being *dead with Chriſt,* and *riſen with him.*

The *ſixth* witneſs that I cite, is, Rom. iii. 28, 31. *We conclude that a man is juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law,* and ſo he is *dead to the law.* Now,

does

does this doctrine deſtroy our living to God? Nay, *Do we make void the law, through faith? God forbid; yea, we eſtabliſh the law:* we eſtabliſh it as a *covenant of works*, while we believe in Chriſt for righteouſneſs, to be imputed for our juſtification; and we eſtabliſh it as a *rule of life*, and holineſs, while we believe in Chriſt for ſtrength, to be imparted for our ſanctification; and ſo being dead to the law in point of juſtification, we live unto God in ſanctification.

The *ſeventh* witneſs that I cite, is, Rom. vi. 14. *Sin ſhall have no dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace.* Where you ſee, that a man's being *under grace*, and not *under the law*, is the very means by which he comes to be delivered, and freed from the *dominion of ſin*, and ſo lives unto God.—— Here is the privilege, deliverance from the dominion of ſin; and the means of it is, by the grace of God in Chriſt Jeſus, by which we are delivered from the law: for, as *the motions of ſin*, Rom. vii. 5. are ſaid to be *by the law*, ſo the law being dead to us, and we by grace, being married to another huſband, we bring forth fruit unto God; *The grace of God, that bringeth ſalvation, teaching us to deny ungodlineſs*, Titus ii. 11. While the law hath power over a man, he cannot but be bringing forth *fruit unto death*, Rom. vii. 5.—— There was never yet an effectual courſe taken for the mortifying of ſin, but by the goſpel, and the grace of Chriſt, which yet ſome ignorantly think leads to licentiouſneſs, as they thought in Paul's days, Rom. vi. 15. Nay, while we are under the law, we are the ſervants of ſin; *But now being made free from ſin, and become ſervants to God, ye have your fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life*, verſe 22.

The *eighth* witneſs that I cite, is, Rom. viii. 2, 3. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the law of ſin and death.* Why? how comes that about? verſe 3. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the fleſh.* Where ye ſee the quality of every

every believer; he is one that lives to God, and *walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:* and now, what is the foundation of this? even freedom from the law, which through our weakneſs could not juſtify us; but our help was laid upon *One that is mighty*, who having come under the law, did, by a ſacrifice for ſin, *condemn ſin in the fleſh, that the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us*, both in point of juſtification and ſanctification.

The *ninth* witneſs that I cite, is, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. *For the love of Chriſt conſtrains us,—that he died for all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live to themſelves, but to him that died for them.* There is true ſanctification, and living unto God; but how came it about? The means thereof is the death of Chriſt, which we have been celebrating in the ſacrament of the ſupper; this is both the means and the motive thereof. What ſtronger motive than this, to *live to him that died for us;* and by his death, *redeemed us from the law?* For we are *dead to the law by the body of Chriſt*, Rom. vii. 4.; that is, by the death of Chriſt, the ſacrifice of his human nature: and hence comes true ſpiritual life, or living to him.

The *tenth* witneſs that I cite, is, 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57. *The ſting of death is ſin, the ſtrength of ſin is the law:* where the law is called the *ſtrength of ſin*, not only becauſe *by the law is the knowledge of ſin*, and ſin would not have power to condemn us, but by virtue of the law which diſcharges ſin; but alſo becauſe ſin gets ſtrength from the law: *Sin taking occaſion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiſcence; for without the law ſin was dead*, Rom. vii. 8. Sin and corruption is ſo irritated by the law, that thereby the ſinner becomes to be more ſinful: which is not the fault of the law, for it prohibites, reproves, and condemns ſin: but the fault of corrupt nature, which is ſo intent in perpetrating evil, that the more any thing is forbidden, the more impetuouſly it follows after it; like a mad horſe, the more he is checked with the bridle, the more mad and furious is he. Now, *The ſtrength of ſin is the law; but thanks be to God, which*

gives

gives us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord:—Victory over the law, which is the strength of sin; and so, being freed from the law, or dead to it, in this way I am freed from sin, and put in case to live unto God.——These are ten witnesses, instead of twenty that might be adduced for the confirmation of this doctrine, *That to be dead to the law in point of justification, is necessary in order to our living unto God in point of sanctification.*——Receive this truth then in the love of it.

II. The *second* thing proposed was, to speak of this strange DEATH of the believer; *I through the law am dead to the law.* Now here four things are to be touched at, 1. What the *law is*, that the believer is dead to. 2. What it is *in the law*, that he is dead to. 3. What it is to be *dead* to the law. 4. The *means* of this, that through the law he is dead to the law.

1*st*, What the *law is*, that the believer is dead to. I know, I have need to be cautious what I say in this captious age, especially upon such a subject as this; but it is in the fear of God, to whom I am accountable, and without regard to any man, that I desire to deliver the truths of the gospel.——What is the law, to which Paul said he was dead? I shall not trouble you with the several acceptations of the *law*, nor the distinctions of it into *judicial*, *ceremonial*, and *moral*. But here though the apostle speaks sometimes of the *ceremonial*, and sometimes of the *moral* law in this epistle; yet in this text, I suppose, with the current of sound divines, that he understands especially the *moral* law, or the law of the ten commandments, considered under the form of a covenant of works. The law is to be taken two ways. 1. *Materially*, for its mere preceptive and directive part. Or, 2. The law may be taken *formally*, as it is a covenant, whether of works or grace. Now, the law, *materially* taken, is still the same, whatever form it be cast into, and it is the transcript of the divine image, after which man was created at first; so that, long before the law was written in tables of stone, it was written in the tables of man's heart; and

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man was obliged to give obedience to this law, as a creature to his Creator, though there never had been any covenant made with him; and this obligation to obedience is eternal, everlaſting, and unchangeable.—But this law was afterwards caſt into two different *forms*, namely, that of the *covenant of works*, and afterwards that of the *covenant of grace*.——Now here, I ſay, it is meant of the law, or covenant of works; in which law there were three things, a *precept*, a *promiſe*, and a *penalty*. 1. The *precept*, which is perfect and perſonal obedience, by our own ſtrength, and in the old covenant-form; *Do;* 2. The *promiſe*, which is life eternal; *Do* and *Live*. 3. The *penalty*, which is death temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal; if you *Do* not, you ſhall *Die*, Geneſis ii. 17. The covenant of works commands good, and forbids evil, with a promiſe of life in caſe of obedience, and a threatening of death in caſe of diſobedience: and ſo this law of works hath a twofold power; a power to juſtify, and a power to condemn; to juſtify, if we obey; and to condemn, if we diſobey. The command of the law, abſtractly and materially conſidered, is, as I ſaid, eternally binding upon all rational creatures, ſo long as they continue to be creatures, and God the Creator: but the command of the law, formally conſidered, or under the form of a covenant of works particularly, binds no longer than the form continues. Now, the commanding power of the law, as a covenant of works, is a power calling us to obey, (or injoining us to do) by our own ſtrength; to obey, as a condition of life; and to obey, under pain of damnation.

2*dly*, As to the *ſecond* thing here, what it is *in the law*, the believer is dead to. Here it muſt be obſerved, That it is only the *believer* that is dead to the law, all others are alive to it; and the believer's being dead to the law, imports, that he is *wholly ſet free* from it; or, as the words of our *Confeſſion* bear, "They are "not under the law as a covenant of works, to be "thereby either juſtified or condemned." Thus they are dead to the law. The law is compared, in our text, to a hard and cruel maſter, and we compared to

ſlaves, and bond-men, who, as long as they are alive, are under dominion, and at the command of their maſters; but when they are dead, they are free from that bondage, and their maſters have no more to do with them. Here then, to be dead to the law, is to be free from the *dominion* and *power* of the law. Now, I think the power of the law may be conſidered, either as accidental or eſſential. It hath an *accidental* power or ſtrength; for example, by reaſon of our ſinful, corrupt, and depraved ſtate, even an irritating power, whereby, as an occaſion, it provokes, and ſtirs up the corruption of the heart in the unregenerate, Romans vii. 8. From this the believer is free, ſo far as he is dead to the law.——But next, There is a power that the law hath, that may be called *eſſential* to it, as a covenant of works; and that is, a juſtifying and condemning power, as I ſaid before; a power to juſtify the obedient, and a power to condemn the diſobedient: now, believers are dead to the law, ſo as they are not under it, to be juſtified or condemned thereby; they are wholly, and altogether free from the law, as it is a covenant of life and death, upon doing, or not doing.

But, for the further clearing of this, I told you upon that queſtion, What law is here meant? That in the law, as a covenant of works, there are three things. 1. The *precept* of obedience. 2. The *promiſe* of life. 3. The *threatening* or *penalty* of death; all which the believer is dead to.

1. The *precept* of obedience, as a condition of life, is one part of the covenant of works; *Do and live*; or, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*: this the believer is delivered from, and ſo dead to the precepts of the law, as a covenant or condition of life. Take heed to what I ſay here; I ſay not, that the believer is delivered from the precept of the law *ſimply*, but as a *condition of life*: for the *command* of perfect obedience, is not the covenant of works; nay, man was obliged to perfect obedience, and is eternally bound to obey the law, though there had never been a co-

a covenant: but the *form* of the precept, or command in the covenant of works, is perfect obedience as a condition of life. Now, it is the *commanding power* of the law, as a covenant of works, that the believer is free from; and it hath no commanding power, but in this ſtrain, namely, to command perfect obedience as the condition of life; and, under pain of the curſe, Obey, and thou ſhalt live; otherwiſe thou ſhalt die. Now, the *ground* of the believer's freedom from the precept of the law, as a covenant of works, or condition of life, is juſt *Chriſt's perfect obedience* to the law, in his room, in his ſtead, which is the true and proper condition of our eternal life and happineſs: *By the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous:—that as ſin hath reigned unto death, even ſo grace might reign thro' righteouſneſs, unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, Rom. v. 19, 20. There is an eternal truth in this, that life is not to be obtained, unleſs all be done that the law requires, *Do this and live;* and that is ſtill true, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* They muſt be kept by us, or our Surety: now the Surety's obedience being imputed to the believer, as the condition of eternal life, the believer is not obliged to obedience to the law as a condition of life: the precept of the law properly is, *Do;* but the precept of the law as a covenant of works, is under this conditional form, *Do, and Live.* Now, if any ſay then, the believer is delivered from obligation to do, or to obey the law, I deny that: for this *Do* is eternally binding; but the precept of the law, as a covenant of works, is not ſimply *Do*, but *Do, and Live:* and this conditional form, which is properly the precept and command of the covenant of works, he is indeed delivered from; for Chriſt, as Surety, came under the law, as a covenant of works, or as it ſtood in this conditional *Do, and Live:* for he yielded perfect obedience to it, to procure life by it; and ſo the believer is wholly delivered from obedience to it; that is, to obtain life by it, or to procure everlaſting life by his obedience. The precept, thus formed as the condition of life, by virtue of the annexation of the promiſe

of life to the obedience of it, is the precept of the covenant of works; and from this precept he is freed, and ſo is dead to the law in reſpect of the precept of it, in and through Jeſus Chriſt his Surety.

2. The *promiſe* of life is another thing in the covenant of works; and this runs in the ſame line with the former, being ſo connected with it. The promiſe of life in the law, or covenant of works, was juſt the promiſe of eternal life, upon condition of perfect obedience: now, the believer's freedom from the law, in this reſpect, flows from his freedom from it in the former reſpect: for, if he be freed from the *Do*, or obedience, as required in that old covenant-form, then he is not to expect eternal life, as it is promiſed in that covenant: nay, the law is diveſted of its promiſe of life to the believer: that is to ſay, his obedience to the law hath not the promiſe of eternal life, as the legal ground and title upon which he is to obtain it: he holds this title to eternal life in Jeſus Chriſt, his Surety, in whom he hath a perfect obedience, to which eternal life is promiſed; and which is now the alone ſure ground upon which it is to be procured. The believer's own obedience to the law, or his goſpel-obedience, and conformity to the law, wrought in him, and done by him, through the help of the Spirit of grace; even this obedience of his, I ſay, hath not the legal promiſe of eternal life, as if it were the legal condition of his obtaining eternal life: no, his goſpel-obedience hath indeed a goſpel-promiſe, connecting it with eternal life, as it is an evidence of his union to Chriſt, *in whom all the promiſes are Yea and Amen;* and as it is a walking in the way to heaven, without which none ſhall ever come to the end; *For without holineſs it is impoſſible to ſee God.*— But the legal promiſe of eternal life made to obedience, and which makes our perſonal obedience to be the cauſe and matter of our juſtification, and as the proper condition of ſalvation and eternal life, this is the promiſe of the law, or covenant of works; and this promiſe it is now wholly diveſted of, as to the believer in Jeſus Chriſt, who hath taken his law-room, and yielded that perfect obedience, to which the promiſe of eternal life

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is now made: and the reaſon why I ſay, the promiſe of eternal life is *now* made to Chriſt's perfect obedience in our room and ſtead, is, Becauſe the law, or covenant of works, made no promiſe of life properly, but to man's own perſonal obedience: it made no mention of a ſurety: but now, in ſovereign mercy, this law-rigour is abated, and the Surety is accepted, to whoſe obedience life is promiſed.

3. The *threatening* of death, in caſe of diſobedience, is another thing in the covenant of works; death, and wrath, and the curſe, is the penalty of the law: death is the reward of ſin and diſobedience to the law; *In the day thou ſinneſt thou ſhalt die;* and this the believer is alſo freed from by the death of Chriſt, who died for our ſins: the law ſaith, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them;* but the goſpel ſaith, *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us,* Gal. iii. 10, 13. As the law then to the believer is diveſted of its promiſe of life, ſo as it cannot juſtify him for his obedience; ſo it is diveſted of its threatning of death, and cannot condemn him for his diſobedience to it as a covenant, that covenant-form of it being done away in Chriſt Jeſus, with reſpect to the believer. I think ſome will, perhaps object, ſaying, That the believer is delivered from the *curſe* of the law, we underſtand; but ſtill we cannot fathom how he is dead to the *command* of the law: that he is dead to the *condemning* power of the law, is plain; but, how is he dead to the *preceptive, mandatory, commanding* power of the law? To which it might be replied, He is dead to, and delivered from the *preceptive* part of the law, not *materially*, but *formally;* for the command of it *materially*, is, *Do*, or yield obedience: this he can never be delivered from, ſo long as he is a creature, and God his Creator: but the command of it *formally*, or under the form of the covenant of works, is, *Do, and Live; Do*, by your own ſtrength; *Do*, as the condition of your eternal life; and *Do*, under the pain of eternal death and damnation: this, I ſay, which

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is the commanding part of the law, *formally* conſidered, as it is a covenant of works, he is wholly and altogether delivered from. To preach the mandatory part of the law, as a *covenant of works*, is to preach the moral law, not merely as a *rule* of life, but as the *condition* of life eternal; in which ſenſe the believer is not at all bound to acknowledge it: and to ſay, that the believer is delivered from the law, that is, only from the *curſe* of the law, would make ſome very ſtrange gloſſes upon many ſcriptures: for example, Gal. iii. 10. *As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe;* the meaning of it then would be, As many as are under the curſe, are under the curſe. It muſt therefore be meant of the *precept* of the law; As many as are under the precept, are under the penalty thereof. The believer then is dead to, and delivered from the law in its commanding and condemning power, and that in, and through Chriſt. And I am not afraid, nor aſhamed to ſay it, in the words of the famous Dr. Owen, "That the whole power "and ſanction of the firſt covenant was conferred u-"pon Chriſt, and in him fulfilled and ended." And I think I ſay no more than what the apoſtle, a greater than he, ſaith, Romans x. 4. *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.*—Thus you ſee what it is in the law, the believer died to, more generally.

3*dly*, The *third* thing here propoſed was, What it is to be *dead* to the law, more particularly as it comes under the notion of death. And here, 1. I ſhall ſhew the *import* of this death. 2. Some of the *qualities* of it.

(1.) To ſhew the *import* of this death. The notion of death may here help us to the import; for,

1. As in death there is no *relation* takes place; it diſſolves the relation betwixt maſter and ſervant, huſband and wife, Job iii. 16. *The ſervant is freed from his maſter*, ſo here, the man being dead to the law, the relation betwixt him and it is diſſolved, Rom. vii. 1,—4. He is now married to Chriſt, and divorced from the law: while the man is alive to the law, the relation ſtands;

ſtands; *For I teſtify to every one that is uncircumciſed, that he is a debtor to do the whole law*, Gal. v. 3.

2. In death there is no *care* or *thoughtfulneſs*, Eccl. ix. 10. *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave, whither thou goeſt*; intimating to us, that in death there is no care nor thoughtfulneſs, nor concern about doing any thing: ſo the man that is dead to the law, he hath no more care, nor concern about the works of the law in point of JUSTIFICATION, than a dead corps about the work in which it was occupied while living: while the man is alive to the law, all his care and concern is about the works of the law; *Do, and Live*.

3. In death there is no *hope*; *The land of the living is the land of hope*, Eccl. ix. 4.: Even ſo the man that is dead to the law, he hath no hope nor expectation from the law, or from his obedience thereto.——The man that is alive to the law, he hath hope, that God will pardon him, and pity him; why? becauſe he does ſo and ſo; he is a good neighbour, he wrongs no-body, he is juſt in his dealings, and careful in his duties, and *touching the righteouſneſs of the law, he is blameleſs*: he hath a good heart towards God, and he hath a good life too; and therefore he hopes to be juſtified and ſaved of God, for Chriſt's ſake: for he hath learned, it may be, to make ſo much uſe of Chriſt, as to think he cannot be ſaved without him; but ſtill his hope and expectation is founded upon the law. But now, the man dead to the law, he hath no hope from the law; nay, he deſpairs of ſalvation by the deeds of the law: as he ſees he cannot do any thing, without grace and ſtrength from above, ſo even when he does any thing by the help of grace, he ſees it ſo lame and imperfect, that God cannot juſtify or ſave him, to the honour and credit of his juſtice, unleſs he hath a perfect righteouſneſs. He hath no hope by the law.

4. In death there is no *toil*, no turbulant paſſion nor affection: natural death puts an end to natural affections, which take place in man's life-time; ſuch as the weary purſuit of what we love, and the wearieſome flight from what we hate, or fear: there is no

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ſuch thing in the grave; *There the weary are at reſt*, Job iii. 19. They that are alive to the law, and *find the life of their hands, they weary themſelves in the greatneſs of their way*, as it is expreſſed, Iſa. lvii. 10.—— Many a weary night and day they may have in purſuing after their lovers, in eſtabliſhiing their darling ſelf-righteouſneſs. The law gives them a wearifome talk, to make brick without affording ſtraw; and leads them with heavy burdens of curſes, in caſe the taſk be not performed.——But when a man is dead to the law, then *the weary are at reſt:* Chriſt is the reſt; *Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* Then the man gets reſt to his conſcience, in the blood and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the end of the law: reſt to his paſſions and affections; he reſts from his fears, legal fears of hell, and wrath threatened in the law: the believer indeed may be filled with them, but ſo far as he is dead to the law, ſo far is he at reſt from theſe legal ſlaviſh fears. He reſts from his love and delight; the law affords its votaries much pleaſure, ſometimes in the performance of their duty in a legal way: but now the believer takes no delight in that way of juſtification; he is out of conceit with himſelf, and his duties, becauſe they are vile; yea, though they were not ſo vile as they are, but perfect, yet he is out of conceit with that way of life, and beholding the glory of the new covenant and way of ſalvation, joins iſſue with Job, chap. ix. 15, 21. *Whom, though I were righteous, yet would not I anſwer, but I would make ſupplication to my judge; tho' I were perfect, yet would I not know my ſoul, I would deſpiſe my life.* In a word, he reſts from his legal griefs and ſorrows, becauſe he reſts from his legal labours. As it is ſaid of the dead in Chriſt, in another ſenſe, Rev. xiv. 13. *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them:* ſo I may ſay in this caſe, Bleſſed are the dead which die to the law, they reſt from their labours, their toilſome, troubleſome, wearifome, legal works, and yet their works do follow them: they are now *created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* But,

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5. In death there is no *ſenſe:* a dead man does not ſee, nor hear, nor taſte, nor ſmell, nor exert any natural ſenſe; ſo that they are dead to it, they do not now *ſee* the lightenings of Sinai all in a flame, as formerly they did; they do not *hear* the thunders thereof; they do not *ſmell* the ſulphure of the burning mountain; they do not *feel* the terror of vindictive vengeance, the tempeſt that ſurrounded the mount; they do not *taſte* the gall, the bitterneſs of the wrath threatened in the law; the bitterneſs of death is over with them, ſo far as they ſee that Chriſt drank the gall for them; yea, ſo far they are dead to the law, they are dead to all Sinai wrath: *They are not come to the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackneſs and darkneſs, and tempeſt, and the ſound of the trumpet, and the voice of words,*—but *they are come to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God,* Heb. xii. 18,—24. But what? Have the godly no ſenſe of law-wrath? Yea, ſo far as they are legal, and under the law (for they are never wholly freed from a legal temper while here) the dead ghoſt of the law may riſe up and fright them; but ſo far as they are dead to the law, it is not law-wrath, but fatherly-wrath that affects them. Indeed, through unbelief, they may fear hell; but they cannot do ſo by faith, ſeeing there is no foundation for either that faith or fear, in the Bible, that a believer ſhall be caſt into hell ſince *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.*

6. In death there is no *motion;* vital motion ceaſes when death takes place: thus, ſo far as a man is dead to the law, ſo far the motions of ſin are killed; for, *the motions of ſin are by the law,* Rom. vii. 5. By the law occaſionally and accidentally men running the more into ſin, by how much the more they are forbidden to commit ſin. Hence Muſculus compares the law, in this reſpect, to a chaſte matron in a brothel-houſe, which by her good advice does prove an occaſion to ſome impudent whores to be more bold, and impudent in their impiety; *Sin taking occaſion by the law,* or commandment, ſaith the apoſtle, *wrought in me all manner of concupiſcence.* But now, ſo far as a

man is dead to the law, ſo far are the motions of ſin killed, and his ſoul quickened to live unto God. Of which more afterwards.

(2.) To ſhew ſome of the *qualities* of this death to the law.

1. It is an *univerſal* death: I do not mean that it is common to all the children of men, though it be a common death to the children of God, and to every one of them; yet it is a rare death among the children of men: *The whole world lies in wickedneſs, and are dead in ſins and treſpaſſes;* few are dead in this ſenſe: but what I mean by its being *univerſal*, is, that the man that is dead to the law in point of *juſtification;* he is dead to *every part* of the law in its old covenant-form, to the *precept* of it, to the *penalty* of it, ſo as he is not to be juſtified by the one, nor condemned by the other. He is dead to *every legal form* of the law; his goſpel obedience thereto, is no part of his righteouſneſs for juſtification before God; if he ſhould endeavour to make his goſpel-obedience to the law, as a rule of life, in the hand of a Mediator, any part of his righteouſneſs for juſtification, he ſo far turns the covenant of grace, and the duties required therein, into a covenant of works, and he ſeeks to live unto that, to which he is, and ſhould be dead. It is true, the form of the law in the goſpel-covenant does not require obedience for juſtification; but yet this corrupt nature is prone to turn to the old byaſs, and abuſe the proper form of it, by turning of the rule of *obedience* into a rule of *acceptance.*——If a man make faith itſelf an act, or any act or fruit of it, the matter of his juſtification, he turns it to a covenant of works: the believer is dead to faith itſelf in this reſpect; yea, faith renounces itſelf, and all things elſe, but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for juſtification. In this ſenſe, he is dead to repentance, love, and other graces; he is dead to every obedience to the law, as a covenant of works; to his natural legal obedience before his converſion; and to his ſpiritual goſpel obedience after converſion: which, though it be a righteouſneſs that God

God works, and is the Author of; yet, becauſe it is the believer that is the ſubject, and made the actor thereof, it is called his own righteouſneſs, or conformity to the law: all which he renounced in the matter of juſtification, deſiring *to be found in Chriſt, not having his own righteouſneſs, that is after the law, but the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith*, Phil. iii. 9.— So that I ſay, it is an *univerſal* death.

2. It is a *lingering* death. It is not eaſy to get the law killed: ſomething of a legal diſpoſition remains even in the believer while he is in this world: many a ſtroak does ſelf, and ſelf-righteouſneſs get, but ſtill it revives again. If he were wholly dead to the law, he would be wholly dead to ſin; but ſo far as the law lives, ſo far ſin lives. They that think they know the goſpel well enough, bewray their ignorance; no man can be too evangelical; it will take all his life-time to get a legal temper deſtroyed. Though the believer be delivered wholly from the law, in its commanding and condemning power and authority, or in its rightful power that it hath over all that are under it; yet he is not delivered wholly from its uſurped power, which takes place many times upon him, while here, through remaining unbelief.

3. It is a *painful* death; it is like the cutting off the right hand, and plucking out the right-eye: The man hath no inclination to part with the law. It is as natural for him to expect God's favour upon his *doing* ſo and ſo, and to expect life and ſalvation by his own obedience, or doing as well as he can, as it is natural for him to draw his breath; *If we do our beſt, God will accept of us*, that is the natural language of every one, who is wedded to the *Do and Live* of the firſt covenant. And, O what a pain is it to be brought off from that way! To die to the law, is moſt unnatural, ſtrange doctrine; and legal pangs, and pains of conviction, and humiliation muſt be borne, before a right thought about dying to the law can be brought forth.

4. It is a *pleaſant* death; it is *painful* at firſt, but pleaſant at laſt: O how pleaſant is it, to ſee ſelf abaſed,

and grace exalted; ſelf-righteouſneſs cried down, and Chriſt's rightooufneſs cried up in the ſoul! *Wiſdom's ways are pleaſantneſs:* and this way particularly, wherein *no fleſh does glory in his preſence;* but *he that glorieth, glorieth in the Lord: he rejoiceth in Chriſt Jeſus, and hath no confidence in the fleſh:* he doth *joy in God, thro' Jeſus Chriſt, by whom he receives the atonement; and grace reigning through righteouſneſs, to eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord,* Rom. v. 11, 21. This death is a pleaſant parting, when the man is brought to a parting with all his own rags for a glorious robe, Iſaiah lxiv. 6. and lxi. 12. and xlv. 24.

5. It is an *honourable* death: to be dead to the law, is a death that brings honour to God, to Chriſt, to the law, and to the believer. It brings honour to God's *holineſs*, which is now ſatisfied by Chriſt's doing; and honour to God's *juſtice*, which is now ſatisfied by Chriſt's dying.—It brings honour to *Chriſt;* for now the man values the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as being indeed *the righteouſneſs of God*, and a full, ſufficient, perfect righteouſneſs.—It brings honour to the *law*, when, inſtead of our imperfect obedience, we bring it to an obedience better than men or angels in their beſt eſtate could give it, even the Lawgiver's obedience; which indeed doth *magnify the law, and make it honourable.*—It brings honour alſo to the *believer* himſelf: he is honoured and beautified with a law-biding righteouſneſs, truly meritorious, and every way glorious: *This is the honour of all the ſaints.*

6. It is a *profitable* death: it is a happy death, and a holy death; profitable both for happineſs and holineſs; profitable both for juſtification and ſanctification. Our legal righteouſneſs is unprofitable; *I will declare thy righteouſneſs, and thy works; for they ſhall not profit thee*, Iſaiah lvii. 12. It is unprofitable for juſtification; for, *by the deeds of the law ſhall no fleſh living be juſtified:* it is unprofitable for ſanctification; for his filthy rags do rather pollute him than purify him.—But the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is profitable every way: they are *happy* that have it; for, they are *juſtified from all things, from which they could not be juſtified*

tified by the law of Moſes: they are *holy* that have it; as will appear in the ſequel of our diſcourſe. Being dead to the law, is the way to live unto God.

4*thly*, The *fourth* thing here propoſed, is the *means* of this death; *I* THROUGH *the* LAW *am dead to the law:* the mean of death to the law, is the law. But then a *queſtion* may be moved, How can this be, ſeeing the law is the *cauſe* of *no good thing* in us, and is *the miniſtration of death and condemnation?* 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8, 9.——In *anſwer* to which, we may obſerve, That though the law is not the *cauſe* of this death to the law, and ſo death to ſin; yet it is an *occaſion* thereof, for it accuſes, terrifies, and condemns us, and therefore occaſions and urgeth us to flee to Chriſt, who is the true cauſe that we die to the law, and to ſin: as the needle goes before, and draws the thread which ſews the cloth; ſo the needle of the law goes before, and makes way for the grace of the goſpel, that it may follow after, and take place in the heart. To be *dead to the law*, and *married to Chriſt*, is all one in ſcripture ſenſe. Now, to *be* DEAD *to the law*, by *the* LAW, is by means of the law, to be led to Chriſt for juſtification, by faith in him, without the deeds of the law; *The law was our ſchoolmaſter to lead us to Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by faith*, Gal. iii. 24.; where the law may be taken either for the *ceremonial* or *moral* law. If we take it for the *ceremonial* law, then it is true that the *ceremonial* law pointed out Chriſt to us truly: but then the ceremonial law was goſpel, in the ſubſtance of it, though vailed over with types and ſhadows, which were to continue till the body was come: but if we take it for the *moral* law, then it brings us to Chriſt only occaſionally; for to bring us to Chriſt, is no proper work of the law, only it is the occaſion thereof, inſomuch as it forces us from itſelf, and makes us to ſee that by it there is no hope of life; ſo it curſes all ſinners, and gives hope of life to none: it is the goſpel only that ſhews us the ſalvation to be had in Chriſt. Now, the law, by the ſeverity of it, is an occaſion to us of ſeeking life, where it is to be found: like

a child

a child, knowing the tenderneſs of his father's love, and finding the ſchool-maſter to be very ſevere and ſharp, he runs from the ſeverity of the maſter, to hide himſelf under his father's wings: yet not by his maſter's teaching, but his ſeverity is the occaſion of it: even ſo it is through the law, and its ſeverity, that the believer is dead to the law: it is then by a law-work, in ſome meaſure, a work of legal conviction and humiliation, that a man comes to be dead to the law.

Here I will name to you a few pieces of *law-work*, which are the occaſion of the man's being *dead to the law*, when the Spirit of God makes uſe of the law for that end.

1. Through the law a man gets the conviction of the *holineſs of God*, and of the holineſs, ſpirituality, and extent of the law itſelf; the Spirit of God enlightens the mind, to ſee the conformity of the command unto the will of God, and to the holy nature of God; this is called the *coming of the commandment*, Rom. vii. 9.—*For I was alive without the law once:* I thought I was holy enough, I found the life of my hand, while I was *touching the righteouſneſs of the law, blameleſs; but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died.* When I ſaw the holineſs and ſpirituality of God's law, ſin revived, and I died; I ſaw that I was a ſinner indeed, and I died to the law, and to all conceit of my own works, and obedience to the law. This conviction makes a man have a doctrinal approbation of the law as *holy, juſt*, and *good:* holy, in its precepts; juſt, in its threatenings; and good, in its promiſes; I conſent to the law, that it is good. By this conviction, a man ſees not only the holineſs and ſpirituality, but the *extent* of the law; *Thy commandment is exceeding broad;* it is extended to all my thoughts, words, and actions; to all my affections, deſigns, deſires, and inclinations. Now, when a man ſees this, it kills his confidence, and makes him ſee he hath no righteouſneſs conformable to the law.

2. Through the law, the man gets the conviction of ſin; *By the law is the knowledge of ſin*, Rom. iii. 20. Con-

Conviction of ſin is the conſciouſneſs of our tranſgreſſing of this holy law. This conviction makes a man ſee ſin in its *nature*, that it is *the tranſgreſſion of the law*, 1 John iii. 4. and ſo a contrariety to the whole nature and will of God. This conviction makes a man ſee the *kinds* of ſin: it may be, the Spirit of God begins with ſome actual, grievous ſin; *actual* ſin is the ſwerving of our actions, either in thought, word, or deed, from the law of God, either by omiſſion or commiſſion. From thence the conviction goes to *original* ſin, letting the man ſee, that not only is his nature deſtitute of all righteouſneſs, and conformity to the law, but that it is wholly corrupt, that he is juſt a hell of ſin and enmity againſt God; and from thence the Spirit of God by the law, convinces the man of the *originating* ſin, even of Adam's ſin, and ſays to him, as it is, Iſa. xliii. 27. *Thy firſt father hath ſinned*, and thou in him.—This conviction makes a man to ſee alſo the *aggravations* of ſin, how much light, and how many mercies he hath ſinned againſt: and alſo the *power* and dominion of ſin, what a ſlave he is thereto, and that the law is ſo far from freeing him therefrom, that it but exaſperates corruption, and ſo is *the ſtrength of ſin*. Now, when the man comes thus to ſee ſin in its nature, kinds, aggravations, and dominion, what can more tend to kill his conceit of righteouſneſs by the law?

3. Through the law the man gets the conviction of *guilt* as well as ſin, that he is bound over to puniſhment according to the law; for guilt is properly an obligation to puniſhment. As by the precept of the law, the man comes to get the knowledge of the intrinſical evil of ſin in its nature; ſo by the penalty of the law, he comes to get the knowledge of the conſequential evil of ſin, as binding him over to hell, death, and damnation; that the curſe of God, the wrath of God, the vengeance of God is the retinue and train of attendants that accompany ſin: and ſo the man is put in fear of hell and damnation. It may be, when he goes to bed, he ſhall never riſe again; when he goes out, he thinks he ſhall never come in again; he is afraid his meat choke him, or the houſe fall above his head,

head, or the earth open and ſwallow him up: ſenſe of wrath haunts him like a ghoſt; the man is put in priſon, and *concluded under ſin*, Gal. iii. 22. Sin is the priſon, the ſinner is the priſoner, God is the Judge, and the curſe of the law is the bond by which the priſoner is tied neck and heel; and from this priſon there is no eſcape, without the mercy of God in Chriſt; who can command this priſoner to come forth? The law cannot do it; it is *weak through the fleſh*; man cannot do it, he is by *nature without ſtrength*: only he, whom God hath given to be a *covenant to the people*, can ſay to the priſoner, *Go forth*, Iſaiah xlix. 6, 9. Now, when the man is thus convinced of guilt and wrath by the law, this hath a tendency to make him *dead to the law*, and to kill his confidence in any legal righteouſneſs of his own. O! is there any poor priſoner here, that finds himſelf ſhut up in priſon, under the power of ſin, and under the guilt of ſin, and wrath of God? O let this give you ſome comfort for the preſent, till God looſe your bands, that this is the way God is taking to make you dead to the law, that you may live to God.

4. Through the law, a man gets the conviction of God's *equity* and *righteouſneſs*, though he ſhould puniſh and execute law-vengeance; and ſo is made to juſtify God, though he ſhould ſend him to hell. I do not ſay, that the ſinner is made content to be damned; no: that, in ſome reſpect, were to be content to be an enemy to God, and to ſin againſt him for ever; for, the ſtate of the damned includes everlaſting enmity and ſin, and ſo it can never be the thing he is made content with; but the man is brought to a conviction of God's equity and righteouſneſs, though he ſhould ſend him to hell, as an everlaſting puniſhment. "To juſtify God, ſays an eminent divine, is "to acknowledge on the one hand, that he does no "wrong to the ſinner in the execution of the curſe; "and, on the other hand, that he does no wrong to "himſelf, or to his own juſtice, when he executes the "judgment threatened againſt ſin, but that he does "that which is right." O, ſays the ſinner, in this caſe,

caſe, God does me no wrong, though he ſhould deſtroy me; and he does not wrong his own juſtice, but is a juſt God in ſo doing: yea, I cannot ſee how the credit of his juſtice ſhould be ſalved, and how he ſhould be glorified in his juſtice, if he do not execute judgment upon me, either in myſelf, or in a ſurety for me, becauſe I have offended ſuch an infinitely glorious Being: *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned,—that thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt; and clear when thou judgeſt*, Pſalm li. 4. *Is God unrighteous, that takes vengeance? God forbid*, Rom. iii. 5, 6. The offence done againſt the greateſt of Beings, deſerves the greateſt of puniſhments, even the eternal deſtruction of the creature. It is true, God delights not in the death of a ſinner; *As I live, I have no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner*, Ezek. xviii. 32.; that is, as it is a deſtruction of the creature, though he delights in it, as it is the execution of juſtice; even ſo, the ſinner convinced by the law, though he cannot take pleaſure in this, to think of being deſtroyed, yet there is ſome ſecret kind of juſtifying that which God takes pleaſure in, namely, the execution of juſtice. O how fit is it, that God's juſtice be glorified! And, how juſt is God, in executing infinite judgment upon ſuch an infinite evil as ſin is! And indeed the ſinner would not ſee ſalvation to be free, if he did not ſee damnation to be juſt; but the ſight of this, in the glaſs of the law, and in the light of the Spirit, tends, in a manner, to reconcile the man with the device of ſalvation through Chriſt, whoſe bloody ſacrifice gives juſtice full ſatisfaction.——He is now content that God's juſtice be glorified by a ſatisfaction more glorious than that which the damned in hell can give; and ſo it tends to make him dead to the law, and to all other legal pennances, and ſham ſatisfactions, which thoſe, who are ignorant of God's equity and righteouſneſs, are ready fooliſhly to invent.

5. Through the law a man gets the conviction of his own *inexcuſableneſs*, which is that effect of a legal work of the Spirit, whereby the ſoul is left without

excuſe of, or defence for itſelf; *Whatſoever things the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under it, that every mouth may be ſtopt, and all the world may become guilty before God*, Rom. iii. 19. Now the whole ſoul of man cries out, *Guilty, guilty;* his fig-leaves of excuſes are blown away; his former ſhifts, and cavils, in defence of himſelf, do now evaniſh: he hath not a word to ſpeak in favours of himſelf. What ſaid he formerly? Why, it may be, his heart ſaid, if not his mouth, O I hope there will be no fear of me, Adam's ſin was not mine; original ſin is what I could not help, it came with me to the world; as for my actual ſins, I ſee others guilty of greater; as for my omiſſion of duties, and commiſſion of treſpaſſes, I ſee none but have their faults; and God is a merciful God, and I hope he will not be ſo unjuſt as to damn his own creatures.——Theſe, and the like, ſhifts and excuſes formerly took place; but now he becomes ſpeechleſs; his mouth is ſtopt. They ſee they will but deceive themſelves by theſe miſerable ſhifts, and that they are guilty, guilty, and ſinful wretches, blacker than the very devil, and have not a mouth to open for themſelves; and ſo they die to all conceit of themſelves, and their own righteouſneſs.

6. Through the law the man comes thus to get a conviction of his *abſolute need of the goſpel*, or of the SAVIOUR revealed thereby; being convinced of his ſinful and miſerable ſtate by nature, and humbled under the ſerious conſideration and view of his ſin and miſery, fearing the wrath of God due to him for ſin, beholding the equity of God, though he ſhould caſt him into hell; having his mouth ſtopt, and deſpairing of getting out of this condition, by his own power, or the help of any other creature; he is now convinced of the need of a Saviour: O I periſh, I periſh for ever, unleſs the Law-giver provide a law-biding righteouſneſs for me! Now, the ſoul is ready to cry out, not in Rachel's ſenſe, *Give me children, or elſe I die;* but in her phraſe, *O give me Chriſt, or elſe I die; give me a Surety, or elſe I die.* Now, he is content to be for ever indebted to the righteouſneſs of another: and

thus

thus the law is the occaſion of bringing a man to Chriſt. And ſo you ſee how it is, that *through the law, they are dead to the law, that they may live unto God.*

III. The *third* thing is to ſpeak of the *believer's* LIFE, which is the fruit of this death; it is a *living unto God.* And now, in ſpeakiug hereto, I would, 1. Enquire what *kind* of life it is? 2. What are the *ſcriptural deſignations* of it? 3. What is imported in its being called a *living* in general? 4. What is imported in its being called a *living unto* GOD in particular?

1ſt, What *kind* of life is it that the believer hath in conſequence of his *being dead to the law?* And,

1. It is not a *natural* life, either in a phyſical or moral ſenſe. Natural life, in a *phyſical* ſenſe, is that which we received from Adam by generation; and it is the function of natural faculties, in living, moving, uſing of ſenſe and reaſon; that is a life that is common to all men, who yet may be dead: neither is it a natural life in a *moral* ſenſe, ſuch as heathens may have; the heathens may have common notions of God, and of good and evil, ſo as to render them inexcuſable in their unnatural immoralities, Rom. i. 19, 20. They have a book of nature, both *internal*, in the remainders of the law in their heart, ſo as they *do by nature the things contained in the law*, Rom. ii. 14, 15. and *external*, in God's works of creation and general providence; *The heavens declare the glory of the Lord, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work*, Pſal. xix. 1. Now, this natural life cannot be the *living to God* here ſpoken of, becauſe this natural life flows only from a natural ſtate, which is a ſtate of death: by nature we are dead, legally dead under condemnation: ſpiritually dead in ſins, wholly corrupt, and the tree being bad, the fruit muſt be bad alſo: a filthy fountain can bring forth nothing but filthy ſtreams.—This natural life does proceed from natural *principles*, and theſe are corrupt; ſuch as the *deſires of the fleſh and of the mind; the luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life.* At beſt their natural life flows from ſelf-love, or love to its own honour, praiſes, profits, or pleaſures: all nature's work are ſelfiſh,

fiſh, however heroic they may be. This natural life is directed by a natural *rule*, ſuch as the light of nature inward, or outward, accompanied with the counſels and examples of naturaliſts; neither does it ever come up to that ſame rule of nature's light, which therefore does condemn them as guilty. This natural life hath only natural *deſigns*, and *ends*: the natural man acts from *ſelf* as his principle, to *ſelf* as his end, aſcribing the glory of all his actions thereunto: thus Herod gave not God the glory of his fine oration, but took the praiſe to himſelf; but he was immediately ſmitten of an angel, and eaten up of worms.—This natural way of living, it is in a natural *manner*, after the *courſe of this world, according to the prince of the power of of the air*, Eph. ii. 2. which is nothing but a *walking in the luſts of the fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh and of the mind*: yea, in this natural life, nothing of Chriſt, or of his goſpel, is either in the ſtate, practice, rule, end, or manner of it; nay, they are *without Chriſt, being aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe; having no hope, and without God*, [or ATHEISTS] *in the world*, Eph. ii. 12.

2. It is not a *legal* life, either of Jewiſh conformity to the ceremonial law, or of perfect conformity to the moral law: It is not that legal life of Jewiſh *conformity* to the *ceremonial law*, or according to the Old Teſtament diſpenſation; for that ceremonial law is abrogated in Chriſt, the ſubſtance of all the old ſhadows; and ſo that Jewiſh life is unprofitable, and vain; yea, it is damnable, and prohibited under the higheſt penalties, Coloſ. iii. 20, 21. And therefore, ſays the apoſtle, Gal. v. 2. *If ye be circumciſed*, [or live according to the ceremonial law, or any other law of works, ſo as to expect juſtification thereby,] *Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing*. Neither is this *living to God* that *perfect life of conformity* to the *moral law*, according to the old covenant of works, which required perfect, perſonal, and perpetual obedience, as the condition of life; and threatened death upon the leaſt failure: I ſay, it is not this life either; for man hath become guilty, and for-

forfeited life, and incurred death by Adam's firſt tranſgreſſion; *By one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin; and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned*, Rom. v. 12. Thus we are for ever incapable of that life, which Adam was capable of before the fall. It is alſo impracticable, becauſe man is by nature *without ſtrength*, Rom. v. 6. We have no ſtrength to give that obedience which the covenant of works requires, becauſe we muſt be redeemed from the curſe thereof, and reſtored to the righteouſneſs thereof, before we can be capable to do what it requires.——And though Adam's ſin and tranſgreſſion were not imputed to us, as indeed it undoubtedly is, yet ſeeing every adult perſon at leaſt hath *ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion*; for, *no man liveth and ſinneth not*; therefore he can never perform the perfect obedience therein required; and *by the deeds of the law no fleſh can be juſtified*. Beſides, there is no article of the covenant of works, that provided for a remedy in caſe of a breach; but all that the covenant of works doth, is, to promiſe life to perfect obedience in man's own ſtrength, and threatens death in caſe of failure, and ſo leaves the tranſgreſſor thereof under its curſe.——In a word, the life according to that covenant cannot be the life here meant, becauſe that covenant ſpeaks nothing of Chriſt, or of his goſpel, by whom, and by which, only we can now come to this living unto God; and becauſe this living unto God preſuppoſes a being dead to the law, or dead to that covenant, otherwiſe we can never live unto God.

3. It is not a *phariſaical* life of external, legal, but imperfect conformity to the law, and thereby endeavouring to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of our own, as the Jews, Romans ix. 31, 32. and x. 3. Many reckon an outward moral converſation to be this living unto God, whether in performing the natural duties of civility and moral honeſty, or in an external performance of religious duties, ſuch as prayer, praiſe, reading, hearing and waiting upon divine worſhip. The church of Laodicea was ſelf-conceited; they thought they *were rich and increaſed with goods*; but, behold the teſti-

teſtificate that Chriſt gave them, that they were *neither cold nor hot*, ſuch as God would *ſpew out of his mouth*; yea, that they were *wretched*, *miſerable*, *blind*, *and naked*: that is all the teſtimony that he gave them, who looked upon themſelves as rich in legal righteouſneſs, and good works. This phariſaical life may be accompanied with a glorious profeſſion; they may profeſs ſoundneſs in the faith, and diſown all theſe legal and unſound principles, which others may have as their ſtated opinion: they may profeſs that righteouſneſs and juſtification is not by the works of the law, but by the faith of Chriſt, or by the works of Chriſt received by faith alone; they may have a ſound head, but no *ſound heart*, nor a *good conſcience*, nor *faith unfeigned*; for *the end of the commandment is love*, proceeding from theſe, 1 Tim. i. 5. People may be like the toad, that hath a precious ſtone in his head, but hath his belly full of poiſon; they may have a head full of knowledge, and a heart full of enmity; a filthy mud-wall may be garniſhed with fine arras; a rotten ſepulchre may be whitened: they may have much of the matter, and external form of godlineſs, and yet want the power, and internal form thereof; *a name to live, and be dead*. Yea, this phariſaical life may be accompanied with many excellent gifts, and common graces, and high attainments (as well as all viſible church-privileges) as we find ſome apoſtates may have, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. Their *underſtanding* may be ſo far enlightened, that they may attain to ſtrange diſcoveries of Chriſt. Balaam was called a *man whoſe eyes were opened*, and that *ſaw the viſions of the Almighty*, Numb. xxiv. 2, 3, 4, 15. Their *wills* may be ſo far renewed, as to have a great many good purpoſes, like theſe who reſolved to *ſerve the Lord with all their heart*, Deut. v. 27, 29. Joſh. xxiv. 18, 21. They may be *almoſt perſuaded to be Chriſtians*.—Their *affections* may be greatly raiſed, and enlarged; they may be raiſed to *ſome ſorrow for ſin*, like Judas, and like Eſau, who *ſought the bleſſing with tears*: to *ſome joy*, like the ſtony-ground hearers, who *received the word with joy* and pleaſure, yet had no

no root; to *ſome delight*, like the Jews, of whom it is ſaid, Iſaiah lviii. 2. That *they ſought him daily, and delighted to know his ways*; yea, to *ſome fear* and *reverence*, like theſe enemies that are ſaid to *ſubmit themſelves*, Pſalm lxvi. 3. and even to *ſome extraordinary raptures*, like theſe who are ſaid to *taſte of the heavenly gift*, and to be *partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*. On all which accounts their *life* and converſation may be changed in part. Thus many, *Through the knowledge of God, and of Chriſt, have eſcaped the pollutions of the world*, 2 Peter ii. 20, 21, 22. The common gifts and graces of the Spirit may warm, ſmooth, and waſh their outward converſation: all this will not amount to this living unto God in the text. Well, what kind of life is this? We reply,

4. It is a *ſpiritual* life, being the action, motion, and gracious ſaving operation of the Spirit of God in us, *cauſing us to walk in his ſtatutes*, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. It is the life of a ſpiritual man. It is impoſſible for one to have a godly life, whatever to the world he may ſeem to have, till he be a godly perſon, or in a ſpiritual ſtate. A man muſt have a ſtate of union to Chriſt, by the faith of God's operation, ſo that being married with his Huſband, he may *bring forth fruit unto God*. The branch of the old Adam cannot bear good fruit; it is only the true branch, planted in Chriſt by the ſpirit of faith, that bears good fruit, John xv. 4, 5. A man muſt be in a ſtate of *reconciliation* with God, juſtified, pardoned, and indemnified, before God accept of any ſervice off his hand; for *two cannot walk together*, or live together, *unleſs they be agreed*. God accepts no action from an enemy, but his returning to him by faith in Chriſt, and then begins all perſonal acceptance. Men muſt be in a ſtate of *adoption*, before it is poſſible that they can be *followers of God as dear children*; in a ſtate of *renovation*, renewed by the Holy Ghoſt in the ſpirit of our mind. The godly man, that is in caſe for a godly life, is juſt a new creation; even the *workmanſhip of God, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God before ordained that he ſhould walk in them*. If the heart be not right with God,

God, a man cannot have a right life, or live unto God. ——But I ſhall go on to enquire,

2*dly*, Into the *ſcriptural deſignations* of this life. To give all the names that it comes under in ſcripture, were too large a taſk: I ſhall only ſingle out ſome of the moſt notable names it gets in ſcripture.——It is ſometimes deſigned from GOD, ſometimes from CHRIST, ſometimes from the SPIRIT, and ſometimes from theſe names that import the other ſpecial *qualities* and *properties* of it.

1. Sometimes it is deſigned from GOD; and it is called the *life of God*, Eph. iv. 18. from which all natural men are alienated: this is a wonderful name that it gets, the *life of God*; who can tell what this life of God is? God lives in himſelf, and the believer lives in God; *His life is hid with Chriſt in God*, Col. iii. 3. The beſt we can ſay of it, is, that it begins in grace, and ends in glory; and is wholly of God, and in him.

2. Sometimes it is deſigned from CHRIST; and ſo it is called a *living by faith on the Son of God*, Gal. ii. 20. immediately following our text; where, when the apoſtle would explain what he underſtands by his *living unto God*, he ſays, *Nevertheleſs I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*. Chriſt, might he ſay, is the ALPHA and OMEGA of my life, the beginning and the end of it; the author and finiſher of it; Chriſt is the principle of my life, from whom I live; Chriſt is the end of my life, to whom I live; Chriſt is the pattern of my life, according to whoſe example I live; Chriſt is the giver of my life, the maintainer of my life, the reſtorer of my life; after decays, *he reſtores my ſoul*, and makes me to *walk in the paths of righteouſneſs, for his name's ſake*: Chriſt is the food of my life; I would die, if he did not feed me with his fleſh and blood, which is living bread and water to me: Chriſt is the medicine of my life; it is by renewed touches of the hem of his garment, and renewed applications to him, that my ſoul is healed: for, there is *healing under the wings of this Sun of righteouſneſs*: Chriſt is the ALL of my life: *For to me to live is Chriſt*; he is my light, my ſtrength, my righteouſneſs. It is the glory of the believer to ac-

acknowledge Chriſt the ALPHA and the OMEGA, and the ALL of his ſpiritual life.

3. Sometimes it is deſigned from the SPIRIT, and ſo it is called a *living in the Spirit*; Gal. v. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit.* It is a living in the *light* and *leading* of the Spirit; *Thy Spirit is good: lead me to the land of uprightneſs.*—It is a living in the *graces* and *fruits* of the Spirit, which are deſcribed, Gal. v. 22. and a bringing forth theſe fruits of the Spirit.—It is a living in the *ſtrength* and *power* of the Spirit, which is therefore called a law; *The law of the Spirit of life, in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the law of ſin and death.* The power of the Spirit hath the *force* of a law within the man, inſomuch that when he walks in the Spirit, he does not *fulfil the luſts of the fleſh:* he ſets the power of the Spirit againſt the power of ſin.—It is a living in the *comforts* of the Spirit, and joys of the Holy Ghoſt; and when he thus lives, the joy of the Lord is his ſtrength.—It is a walking in the *liberty* of the Spirit; and, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.* When a man hath this life, then he hath liberty to hear, read, pray, believe, mourn; and liberty to ſerve the Lord: *Truly I am thy ſervant, thou haſt looſed my bonds.*——In a word, it is a living in the *love* of the Spirit, and in a conſtant dependence on the Spirit.

4. Sometimes it is deſigned from theſe names that import other ſpecial *qualities* and *properties* of it. And here I might bring in a multitude of ſcriptures. It is called a *holy* life; *Be ye holy as I am holy.*—It is called a *humble* life; *Walk humbly with thy God.*—It is deſigned a *heavenly* life; *Our converſation is in heaven.* The man is heavenly in his thoughts, and *ſpiritually-minded:* heavenly in his ſpeech, deſiring to edify theſe that are about him; heavenly in his affections, which are *ſet upon things above;* his deſire and delight being ſet upon heavenly things: heavenly in his hope; *Looking for that bleſſed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God:* heavenly in his trade, trading daily to the heavenly country by faith, prayer, and drawing bills of exchange upon Chriſt, as it were, for all that

he ſtands in need of.—It is called an *upright* life; *No good thing will he withhold from him that walketh uprightly.*—It is denominated a *well-ordered* life; *To him that orders his converſation aright, will I ſhew the ſalvation of God.*—It is called a *circumſpect* life; *See that ye walk circumſpectly.*—It is called a *goſpel* life; *Let your converſation be as it becometh the goſpel;* that is, as it becomes a goſpel-ſtate, goſpel-principles, goſpel-rules, goſpel-patterns, goſpel-motives, and goſpel-ends; and, under the influence of goſpel-grace, *Adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour.*——But, omitting all theſe, I only inſtance in one ſcripture, wherein this *living unto God* is deſcribed, in ſuch a manner, as includes all other properties of it; yea, and comprehends all the duties of obedience we are called to; *The grace of God that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world,* Titus ii. 11, 12.; where you ſee, this living unto God comprehends all theſe duties of *piety* towards God, *ſobriety* towards ourſelves, and *righteouſneſs* towards our neighbour, which we are obliged to by the law, as a rule of life and holineſs; and all under the influence of the grace of God, revealed in the goſpel, teaching us theſe things efficaciouſly: for the law teacheth them only *preceptively;* but it is the goſpel that teacheth them *effectively; working in us both to will, and to do.* O that we knew this life more than we do.

3*dly*, The *third* thing here, was, What is imported in its being called a *life* in general? Indeed this living to God, is the only life that deſerves the name of life. In *vegetative* life, the trees of the field do excel men; for, from little plants, they turn to ſtately oaks. In *ſenſitive* life, the beaſts of the field do excel man, for they go beyond him in theſe natural faculties; as the dog in ſmelling, the eagle in ſeeing, the hare in hearing, and other creatures in other ſenſes.—In *rational* life, many heathen philoſophers may excel the Chriſtian. So that it is not the *vegetative* life, whereby plants excel us; nor the *ſenſitive* life, whereby beaſts

beaſts excel us: nor the *rational* life which reprobates have as well as we; but the SPIRITUAL *divine life*, that deſerves the name; without which, our life is but a death. However, this ſpiritual life, or living to God, may be called life, becauſe it hath all theſe things in it ſpiritually, which natural life hath in it naturally: as,

1. Life hath *motion* in it; and ſo here, this ſpiritual life imports motion; where-ever the Spirit of life comes, there is a *motion among the dry bones.*—— Now, there are ſome *duties* he moves in, ſuch as prayer; *Behold he prayeth*, who never prayed to purpoſe before: he moves in the duties of hearing, reading, examination and mortification.——Now, there are ſome *graces* that move in him; *faith* begins to move, ſaying, *I believe, Lord, help my unbelief: Hope* begins to move, *He is begotten to a new and lively hope: Love* begins to move, may be in ſighs and groans, for want of love. Now he moves, and the *term* he moves *from*, is, ſin, Satan, the world, ſelf, ſelf-righteouſneſs; and the *term* he moves *to*, is, God and Chriſt, and heaven, and heavenly things. So far as this divine life takes place, ſo far all the faculties of the ſoul move towards God; the underſtanding, to ſee him; the will, to ſerve him; the affections, to embrace him: and all the members of the body move towards God; the eye is lift up to heaven in prayer and ſupplication; the ear is open to receive inſtruction; the mouth enlarged to ſing his praiſes; the tongue will be no more the trumpeter of idle communication; the hand and heart will be inſtruments of devotion; the knees will be bowed to the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the feet will delight to carry the man to the houſe of the Lord: all is in motion for God, ſo far as this life takes place. You may here ſee, by the way, whether you have or want this life, which is a living to God. Though I ſee an image lively repreſenting a man, having eyes, ears, mouth, noſe, hands, feet, yet I know it hath no life in it, becauſe it hath no motion; ſo, if we ſee a profeſſor without a ſuitable practice, we may ſay he is an

idol, he is no Chriſtian, but the image of a Chriſtian. It is true, a hypocrite may have all theſe external motions, like a painted puppy, that may, by ſome engine, be made to dance, and move up and down, but from no vital principle of life.

2. Life hath *breath* it in; James ii. 26. *The body without* BREATH *is dead*, as it may be rendered; ſo in this life there is breath: if a man's breath be held in a little while, the perſon cannot live; ſo the believer would die, if he had not breath in a ſpiritual ſenſe. What is the air he breathes in? It is juſt the Spirit of God; *Awake, O north-wind; come, thou ſouth; blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out.* What is the breath that is put within him? It is the Spirit of God: the Holy Ghoſt is that to the believer, that breath is to the body; yea, that the ſoul is to the body.——God breathed into Adam the breath of life; and he breathes on the believer, ſaying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt: I will put my Spirit within you.* What lungs does he breathe with? It is faith; we receive the promiſe of the Spirit of faith. And what things does he breathe after? Indeed the earthly man breathes after earthly things, ſaying, *Who will ſhew us any good?* But the heavenly man breathes after heavenly things; *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.* Many perſons have a ſtinking breath; it hath the ſmell of earth; yea, the ſmell of hell: ſome breathe out blaſphemies and oaths: ſome breathe out cruelty and wrath: but the man that hath this life, and lives unto God, his breath is a ſweet breath; ſo far as he lives unto God, his breath ſmells of heaven, and of God, and of Chriſt. But,

3. Life hath uſually *growth*; even ſo this life is a growing life; *this well of water ſprings up to everlaſting life.* Let a painter draw the figure of grapes never ſo artificially, yet they may be ſeen and diſcerned from natural grapes, becauſe they grow not: thus the painted hypocrite may look well, but never grows. A man that hath this divine life, is uſually growing; if not upwardly in holineſs, yet downwardly in humility; if not ſenſibly in outward fruitfulneſs, yet inſenſibly in in-

inward ſighs and ſobs, becauſe of his unfruitfulneſs; and in pantings of ſoul towards perfection: *He that hath clean hands, waxeth ſtronger and ſtronger.* Indeed a winter time, or ſeaſon of languiſhing, may put the believer far back, and interrupt the growth; but a ſummer-reviving will make up all again.

4. Life hath *appetite* and *ſenſe*; even ſo this life imports ſpiritual *appetite* and ſpiritual *ſenſe*: there is appetite after ſpiritual food. Many pamper their bodies and ſtarve their ſouls; but he that thus lives, he hath a *hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs*; and *like new-born babes, deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby.* The doctrine of the goſpel is his life; for, a *man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* He hath an appetite after theſe words of grace, and *draws water with joy, out of theſe wells of ſalvation.* Many are the ſecret longings and pantings of the living ſoul, after the living God, who is his life: and as life ſeeks its own preſervation continually, ſo does the living ſoul in the living God, in whom only his life is hid. ——There is *ſenſe* alſo; here life is ſenſible of whatſoever is an enemy to it, and reſiſts it; the more life, the more ſenſe; and the more ſenſe, the more reſiſtance: even ſo they that live this life unto God, they feel corruption, and they fight againſt it; *For the Spirit luſts againſt the fleſh, and the fleſh againſt the Spirit:* they groan under the weight of corruption, which they feel, and reckon themſelves wretched on the account thereof: *O wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* They that have no feeling of ſin, no fighting againſt it, do look like theſe that have this life.——They who have ſpiritual ſenſes, at leaſt who have them exerciſed, they have the *ſeeing eye*; they ſee the evil of ſin; they ſee the beauty of holineſs; they ſee the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; they ſee God in his ordinances: they ſee an internal glory, in the external adminiſtration of ordinances, which others not ſeeing, they think very little of theſe things: alſo they ſee God in his providences; in his judgments, they ſee a juſt God;

and

and in mercies, they ſee a merciful God; and themſelves *leſs than the leſt of all his mercies.*—They have the *hearing ear*; they hear the voice of God in the word, and rod; They *ſmell* the ſavour of his name, which is as *ointment poured forth*: They taſte his goodneſs, and feel his power.——And thus you ſee what may be imported in its being called a *life* in general.

4*thly*, The *fourth* thing was, What is imported in its being called a *living unto God*: what is this *living unto God?* I have ſaid ſeveral things about it already; but this *living unto God*, more particularly, may import theſe four things following,

1. The believer's *living unto God*, imports, his living *ſuitably to the relations* that God ſtands in to him, and he unto God, as being his God in Chriſt Jeſus; and ſo it is a living to him as our *Redeemer*, both by price and power; as theſe that *are not our own, but bought with a price*; and therefore *glorifying the Lord in our ſouls and bodies which are his.*—It is a living to God as our *Head*: God, in Chriſt, is the believer's Head; and ſo to live to him as our Head, is to live as members of ſuch a Head, drawing ſpiritual virtue, light, life, and comfort from him as the Head.—It is a living to God as our *Huſband*; *Thy Maker is thy huſband*: and ſo to live to him in this relatton, is to live reverently, lovingly, affectionately, with ſubmiſſion and ſubjection to our Huſband, as becomes the ſpouſe of ſuch a glorious Huſband.—It is a living to God as our heavenly *Father*, depending on him as children on their father; *Wilt thou not from this time call me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?* Jer. iii. 4.—It is a living to God as our *Judge*, *Law-giver*, and *King*; and ſo it is a living as theſe that are accountable to, and as we ſhall anſwer at the tribunal of this impartial *Judge*: it is a ſitting at the feet, and receiving the law from the mouth of this righteous *Law-giver*: and it is a yielding the tribute of praiſe, obedience and ſubjection to this almighty *King*.——In a word, it is a living to God as the *object* of our *worſhip* and *adoration*; loving him as the *Lord our God, with all our heart, ſoul, mind, and ſtrength.*

ſtrength.——Thus, I ſay, to live to God, is to live ſuitably to all theſe relations he ſtands in to us.

2. The believer's *living unto God*, imports, his living *ſuitably* to theſe *privileges* and *favours* that he receives from God.——Hath he enlightened us in the knowledge of himſelf? Then, to live to him, is to *walk as children of light*, and not as thoſe that are yet in darkneſs and ignorance.—Hath he *called* us effectually? Then, to live to him, is to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.*—Hath he given us *grace?* Then, to live to him, is to live, not as graceleſs, but as gracious perſons; not as thoſe that are in a ſtate of nature, but in a ſtate of grace.—Hath he *pardoned* our ſins, *juſtified* our perſons, and brought us into *peace* with himſelf? Then, to live to him, is to *ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith he hath made us free.*—Hath he *renewed* and *ſanctified* us? Then, to live to him, is to live as renewed, and ſanctified perſons, whoſe luſts are mortified, and whoſe ſouls are transformed into the image of God.—Hath he poured in the promiſe into our hearts by the Spirit? Then, to live to him ſuitably thereunto, is, having *theſe promiſes, to cleanſe ourſelves from the filthineſs of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.*—Hath he made us *heirs* of glory? Then, to live to him, is to live as candidates for heaven; as *pilgrims and ſtrangers, abſtaining from fleſhly luſts;* travelling to the other world, having our affections and converſation in heaven.

3. The believer's *living unto God*, imports, his living in *communion with him*, and *comfortable enjoyment of him:* In *communion with him;* in the contemplation of him; *ſanctifying the Lord in our hearts:* in a conſtant affection to him; *having his love ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt:* and in a conſtant dependence on him; receiving all from him by faith, and returning all to him in duty and gratitude.—It is a living in the *comfortable enjoyment of him*, as all our portion and happineſs, all our ſalvation and deſire; renouncing all things in heaven and earth as our portion, but a God in Chriſt alone, ſaying, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?*

and

and there is none in all the earth that I deſire beſides thee.

4. The believer's *living unto God*, imports, his living in *conformity to God*; and indeed, ſo far as we enjoy God, ſo far will we be conform to him. As it will be in *glory*, *we ſhall be like him*, for, *we ſhall ſee him as he is*; ſo it is in *grace* here: the more the ſoul ſees and enjoys him, the more is he like unto him; *Beholding his glory, we are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory.* And ſo this *living unto God*, it is a living in conformity to God's *nature*; being *holy as he is holy; perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.* Is he a perfect God? Then, to live to him, is to *go on to perfection*, Heb. vi. 1.—It is a living in conformity to his *way of living*: God's way of living is a holy, juſt, good, faithful, merciful way; having a general good-will to all, and a ſpecial good-will to ſome: and ſo ought our ways to be.—It is a living in conformity to God's *ends*: God's great end, that he ſets before himſelf, is the glory of his name, the honour of his Son, the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, the ruin of *Satan's* kingdom, and in all, the praiſe of his rich and free grace: and ſurely we live to God, when we have theſe ends alſo which are God's ends.—It is a living in conformity to his *law*, as a *rule* which is the tranſcript of his communicable nature, for our practice; *If ye love me, keep my commandments*: we do not love him, if we do not ſo. They then that live to him, they do, from love as well as conſcience, obey him.——Theſe things might be greatly inlarged: however, thus you ſee, in ſhort, what it is to live unto God. We are telling, and you are hearing, what this life is; but, O that we could live this life, as well as ſpeak and hear of it! Look to the Lord, that he may make you know it to your experience. It is called a *living to God*, 1. Becauſe it hath the *Spirit* of God for the *principle* of it. 2. Becauſe it hath the *word* of God for the *rule* of it. 3. Becauſe it hath the *love* of God for the *motive* of it. And, 4. Becauſe it hath the *glory* of God for the ultimate *end* of it.

IV. The

IV. The *fourth* thing propoſed was, to ſhew the INFLUENCE that this being *dead to the law*, hath upon *living to God*; or the NECESSITY of this *death*, in order to this *life*. Here I might ſhew, 1. That it is neceſſary. 2. Whence it is neceſſary.

1*ſt*, That it is *neceſſary* that we die to the law, in point of juſtification, before we can live to God in point of ſanctification: beſides what was ſaid upon the *firſt* head, for the confirmation of the doctrine, theſe following conſiderations, or remarks, may diſcover the *neceſſity* of being *dead to the law*, in order to our *living to God*.

1. *Remark*, That a man that is under the law, can *perform no holy act*: he may do ſome things that are *materially* good, but nothing can he do that is *formally* good, or holy: and his work, inſtead of ſanctifying him, does ſtill more and more pollute him; *To the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure; but even their mind and conſcience is defiled*, Titus i. 5. He then that is alive to the law, and under the covenant of works, his works can never make him holy, but rather more and more unholy.

2. *Remark*, The man that is under the law, hath *no promiſe of holineſs* or *ſanctification by that law*. The law only promiſes life, upon perfect obedience, in our own perſon; and if true ſanctification may be in one that is under the covenant of works, then we muſt change the articles of the covenant, and promiſes of the covenant of grace, and make ſanctification no promiſe of it: we muſt blot out theſe promiſes, *I will put a new Spirit within you*, and, *I will write my law in your hearts*: and all other promiſes of the like nature, muſt be razed out of the covenant of grace: If one under the covenant of works may attain to ſanctification by his own works, there is no need of this promiſe.

3. *Remark*, That the man that is under the law, hath *no principle of holineſs*. The grand principle of true holineſs, is the Spirit dwelling in the man: now, how does one receive the Spirit of ſanctification? *Is it*

by the works of the law? No; but by the hearing of faith, Gal. iii. 2. It is the doctrine of grace, not of works, that makes us partake of this Spirit. It is the new teſtament, or new covenant, that is the *manifeſtation of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. Thereby the Spirit is miniſtred, or conveyed to us, but not by the law. It is the *goſpel* that calls us *effectually to ſanctification*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13, 14. We received *the promiſe of the Spirit through faith*, and not by the *works of the law*, Gal. iii. 14.

4. *Remark*, That the man that is under the law, is *without Chriſt*, in whom ſanctification only is to be found: they that are ſaints, are *ſaints in Chriſt Jeſus*, as the apoſtle deſigns them; and *ſanctified in Chriſt*: and our implantation into Chriſt, is only from grace, and not from the works of the law; and ſo is our ſanctification only from grace, and only in Chriſt, who *gave himſelf for his church, that he might ſanctify it*, Eph. v. 25.

5. *Remark*, The man that is under the law, is *without ſtrength*, and cannot perform obedience to the law: *the law is weak through the fleſh*, and cannot juſtify him, neither can it ſanctify him. In order to ſanctification, a new creation is neceſſary: the clean heart muſt be created; and the man created unto good works: creating power muſt be put forth: and creation is a work of God. We muſt therefore make a God of our works, and edify them, and endow them with a creating power, if we think, by the works of the law, to be ſanctified; or aſcribe ſuch efficacy to them, as to work true ſanctification in us. No man, then, that is under the law, or covenant of works, by giving himſelf to all holy duties and actions, and exerciſing himſelf in them, can come to attain true holineſs, or to be truly ſanctified.

6. *Remark*, That the man that is under the *power of the law*, is under the *power of ſin*. Whence is it, that the believer is freed from the power and dominion of ſin? It is becauſe he is *under grace*, and not *under the law*, Rom. vi. 14. Shewing us, that theſe that are under the law, are under the power and dominion

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of ſin. How ſo? Even upon the account of all the reaſons already aſſigned; and not only ſo, but becauſe *the law is the ſtrength of ſin*, 1 Cor. xv. 56. Particularly as it irritates corruption, ſtrengthening and ſtirring it up; *Sin taking occaſion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiſcence.* Sin, by occaſion of the reſiſting command, brake out the more fiercely. Hence the law is only the occaſion, and ſin dwelling in us the cauſe; as the ſhining of the ſun is the occaſion, why a dung-hill ſends forth its filthy ſavour, it is the corruption and putrification therein that is the cauſe; ſo here, the light of the law ſhining, and diſcovering ſin and duty, is the occaſion of ſin's irritation and increaſe, but corruption itſelf is the cauſe. Well, ſo it is, that a man being under the law, is under the power of ſin: how then can he live unto God, while under the law? or, how can ſanctification take place while he is alive to the law, or not dead thereto?—Theſe things may make it evident, I think, that it is neceſſary that a man be dead to law, and brought from under it, before he can have true ſanctification, or live unto God.

2*dly*, Whence it is neceſſary, that a man be dead to the law in point of juſtification, in order to his living to God in point of ſanctification; Theſe particulars already mentioned, afford ſo many reaſons of the neceſſity thereof: yet ſome things more may be ſaid, for the further clearing of this point, namely, The *influence*, that *dying to the law*, hath upon our *living unto God*. Here two queſtions occur, 1. What influence *living* TO *the law*, hath upon a man's *living* IN *ſin*. 2. What influence a man's *dying* TO *the law*, hath upon his *dying* to *ſin*, and *living* UNTO *God*.

1. What influence a man's *living* TO *the law*, or being alive to the law, hath upon his *living* IN *ſin*.—This is a ſtrange doctrine, ſome may think; but it is as true as ſtrange, that the law, and our works of obedience to the law, while we are under it, is the cauſe of deſtruction, inſtead of ſalvation, Romans ix. 31, 32. There you ſee it deſtroyed the whole Jewiſh

nation; *Iſrael miſſed righteouſneſs, becauſe they ſought it by the works of the law.*——Now, a man's being alive to the law, hath influence upon his living in ſin, and ſo upon his deſtruction, in the following ways,

1. Becauſe hereby he becomes *hardened in ſin* and *ſecurity*, while he thinks he hath ſome good work to bear him out, Prov. vii. 14. What made the filthy whore there, impudent and hardened in her ſins? Why? *I have peace-offerings with me; this day I have paid my vows.* Thus the Phariſees, for a pretence, made long prayers; and hereupon were hardened in their ſinful courſes, fearleſs of wrath: why I have done ſo and ſo.

2. Hereby they are *kept from Chriſt*, who only *ſaves from ſin.* The works of the law ſtep in betwixt them and Chriſt, and the man takes Chriſt's bargain off his hand, promiſing the ſame that Chriſt promiſed, even obedience to the law: *I delight to do thy will*, ſays Chriſt; nay, I will do it myſelf, ſays the man that is under the law: he makes himſelf his own ſaviour.—What! will not God accept of my good and honeſt endeavours? This is what he ſets up on Chriſt's throne; and if Chriſt be pulled down from his throne, will it be ſufficient that we ſet up an honeſt prince in his room? They have ſome things to ſay for themſelves, which, they hope, will bring them off before God. Thus they reject Chriſt, *the Lamb of God, which takes away the ſins of the world;* and how can they but live unto ſin, whatever they may think of themſelves?

3. Hereby their *pride* and *boaſting* is foſtered, Rom. iv. 4. *To him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt:* and the man expects his due for his work which he glories in; for, *boaſting is not excluded by the law of works*, Rom. iii. 27. and therefore the man is loath to part with his own righteouſneſs, which is by the law: becauſe of his pride, he will not ſtoop to live upon another, while he can ſhift for himſelf. Self-love will not ſuffer a man to think the worſt of himſelf, ſo long as he is alive to the law: nay, I hope I have a good heart to God, and I will do ſomething that will pleaſe God; and ſo it is no little thing will bring

bring him to *ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God*, Rom. x. 3. Thus the law foſters his pride, and ſure the proud man was never a holy man. But,

4. Hereby ſin is *ſtrengthened* and *encreaſed*, as I ſaid before: the *motions of ſin are by the law*, Rom. vii. 5. *The law entered, that ſin might abound*, Rom. v. 20. Not only as to the knowledge of it, which is by the law, but as to the actual out-breaking of it from the heart; like a river being bounded and dammed up by the law, it ſwells and breaks out the more violently. The wicked nature of man, being reproved, ſwells and riſes like a ſnake brought to the fire.

5. Hereby the man becomes *deſperate*; for the law ſays, There is no hope without a perfect obedience; and the man having wearied himſelf in doing nothing anſwerable to what the law requires, comes at laſt, perhaps, to ſee there is no hope, and ſo he dies in deſpair; I mean, he dies in ſin, ſaying, There is no hope; and therefore after idols I will go: he flies away from God as Adam did.

6. Hereby he becomes *ſlaviſh* alſo; the fear, torment, and wrath, which the law brings along with it, when the penalty of it is ſeen, weakens the man's hands; and theſe lying like heavy loads upon the ſoul, it is thereby fettered and bound in priſon, hence ſaid to be *held in the law; that being dead wherein we were held*, ſays the apoſtle. The man is held, and ſhut up in the priſon of the law, and ſo out of caſe for ſervice while his bands are not looſed; or at beſt his ſervice is *ſlaviſh*, and not *free*; the law holds him in priſon, he cannot ſerve God freely. The free Spirit of the goſpel is what the world cannot receive, while under the law.——Thus you may ſee what influence *living to the law* may have upon men's *living in ſin*, ſo as they cannot *live unto God*.

(2.) What influence a man's *dying* TO *the law* hath upon his *living* UNTO *God*, or upon holineſs and ſanctification? To this we reply, It hath eſpecially a twofold influence, both a *phyſical* and *moral* influence.—And,

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[1.] It hath a *phyſical* influence upon a man's ſanctification, in regard that a man that is dead to the law, *is married to Chriſt*, Rom. vii. 4.; and ſo neceſſarily the man muſt be holy, being disjoined from the law, and joined to the Lord Jeſus, who hath ſatisfied the precept of the law by his death: and in him, not only have they thus a full diſcharge of all the demands and commands of the law, but alſo, by the implantation and inhabitation of his Spirit, are created to a conformity to the image of God; and they cannot but live unto God. For,

1. In Chriſt they have *life:* though, while under the law, they were *dead in ſin and treſpaſſes;* now, in Chriſt, *they have life, and have it more abundantly:* they are quickened by virtue of their union to this everlaſting Head; *becauſe he lives, they live alſo.* A dead perſon can produce no living action, but Chriſt is the life of his people: *He that hath the Son hath life;* and then, and never till then, is he in caſe for ſpiritual action and living unto God: *He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.* Vain men fancy within themſelves, that they have not loſt their life, and ſo they think they can do ſomething that will pleaſe God, and profit themſelves for juſtification and ſanctification, even before ever they think of coming to Chriſt; but we may as well expect, that a dead corps will riſe of itſelf, and do the natural actions of life, as to expect that you ſhould riſe, and act ſpiritually, before you be in Chriſt. The natural conſcience indeed may be rouzed a little, and prevailed with to ſet about this and that duty; but there is no living unto God, till you get Chriſt: in him the believer hath life, even in his Head; as a man cannot live without his head; but, being joined to this new head, and disjoined from the law, he cannot but live.

2. In Chriſt, his new Head and Huſband, he hath *light* as well as *life:* as you know, the eye is in the head, ſo the believer's eye is in Chriſt his light, whereby he ſees ſin and duty; ſees to work, ſo as he may live to God. The man that is under the law, he is in the dark, and cannot ſee to work the works of holineſs, which

which is a living unto God. He is blinded with ſelf-conceit; he ſees not the vanity of his old covenant obedience; and he ſees not the way of the new covenant goſpel obedience, till he get the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt, who is *the light of the world*; a *light to lighten the Gentiles*: by whoſe light the believer ſees how to walk in a way well-pleaſing to God.

3. In Chriſt, his new Head, he hath *ſtrength*: the man that is under the law, joined to it as his Head, he hath no *ſtrength* for his work, and the law gives him none; and ſo he cannot live to God: but the believer can ſay, *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength?* whereas others have no ſtrength to produce ſpiritual actions; ſin domineers over them, and they have no ability to ſhake off the yoke of ſin, their ſtrength being but weakneſs. The believer hath ſtrength in his head; *all things are poſſible to them that believe: they can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening them: they can overleap a wall, and break bows of ſteel in pieces.* O believer! *be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt.* O it is ſtrange, the grace that is in him, is in thee; as the life that is in the heart, is in the toe, the foot, the utmoſt members! There is a communication of vital ſtrength and influences from the heart and head to all the members: the believer's grace is in Chriſt; and the grace that is in Chriſt is in the believer. Here is a myſtery to the world, but yet this myſtery lies wrapt up in that word, *Be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus.* If the grace that is in Chriſt, were not in the believer alſo, according to the meaſure of the communication, how could he be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt? *My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee, and my ſtrength ſhall be perfect in thy weakneſs.*

4. In Chriſt, his new Head, he hath *liberty*: under the law the man is under bondage, and ſevere bondage to the command of perfect obedience, upon pain of death and damnation; and ſo under bondage to the curſe of the law, and fear of God's everlaſting wrath; and thereby he can do nothing; he hath neither heart nor hand to ſerve God; he is bound neck and heel; but

but in Chriſt he hath *liberty*; *If the Son make you free, you are free indeed*: free from ſervice; *Truly I am thy ſervant, thou haſt looſed my bands.* Now, he *walks at liberty*; yea, *runs the way of God's commandments, when he doth enlarge his heart.* This is the glorious liberty of the children of God begun in time, whereby they are put in caſe to live unto God.—Now, he is at liberty to ſerve *chearfully*, being delivered from the hands of all his enemies, to *ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs, before* God, *all the days of his life.*—Now he is at liberty to ſerve *ſpiritually*; the Spirit of Chriſt being put within him, and *cauſing him to walk in God's ſtatutes.* Now he is at liberty to ſerve *hopefully*; knowing that *his labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord*: though, while under the law, his labour was but vain labour.—Now, he is at liberty to ſerve *acceptably*: being *accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6.; that is, not only for his ſake; for there is much more in it he being our Head, and we members of his body; and he, as our Head, having performed perfect obedience to the *precept* of the law, and given complete ſatisfaction to the *penalty* of the law; the Head having done it, the whole body is reputed as having done it; and ſo we are accepted in him; his *doing* is ours, becauſe we are in him, as our Head, accepted in the Beloved; our perſons are accepted in him, and next our performances and duties. O what ſweet liberty is here! what a ſweet foundation for ſpiritual and acceptable ſervice and living unto God! But this leads me next to ſhew,

[2.] That it hath a *moral* influence upon ſanctification; a man's being dead to the law, disjoined from it, and joined to Chriſt, hath not only a *phyſical*, but alſo a *moral* influence; in regard that hereby he is conſtrained ſweetly to live unto God; *The love of Chriſt conſtraineth us*, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. If we have not love at the root of our actions, love to a God in Chriſt, we are but empty vines, that bring forth fruit to ourſelves; it is but *ſelf-love*, which is not fruit unto God, or living unto him. The *natural* way of man's thinking is, we ſhould ſerve God, that he may ſave us; but the *goſ-*

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pel way is, he ſaves us, that we may ſerve him. What made Paul ſay, *Being dead to the law, I live unto God?* Why? in the next verſe he enlarges on it, *I live to him, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* Be perſwaded, man, woman, of this; or elſe as the Lord lives, you ſhall die in a deluſion; that if you have not love to God, you have not a ſpark of holineſs, though you ſhould pray all your days, and work never ſo hard; *I will circumciſe their hearts to love me*, is the promiſe; and this love is the heart and life of religious duties.—Now, you cannot have love, unleſs you ſee ſomewhat more or leſs of his love to you: we are naturally enemies to God, though we cannot get one of a thouſand that will take with it: they think they have a love to God. God forbid, ſay they, that we ſhould be enemies; nay, but I tell you, in the name of God, whether you will hear it or not, that as you are enemies by nature, and born with a dagger of enmity in your heart and hand againſt God; ſo, till you get ſomewhat of the knowledge of God, as *in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf*, this enmity will never be killed. Now, I ſay, it is the believer in Chriſt, who, being dead to the law, and joined to the Lord, hath this love; and this love conſtrains him, ſo that he *brings forth fruit unto God, and lives unto him*, Rom. vii. 3.; being *dead to the law*, and *married to Chriſt*, he *brings forth fruit unto God.* The believer hath ſufficient encouragement to make him live unto God: he ſees Chriſt hath ſatisfied divine juſtice, fulfilled all the righteouſneſs of the law, that he hath done that which is impreſtible, or unperformable by us; and when by faith he beholds this, he is encouraged to ſerve God. Hence, ſays the pſalmiſt, *There is mercy with thee, that thou mayeſt be feared.*——Might he not have ſaid, There is *majeſty* with thee, that thou mayeſt be feared? The matter is, the *majeſty* of God would put the ſinner to flee from God, as Adam did, when he heard his voice in the garden; but his *mercy* makes us fear and love him, ſerve and obey him; *Then they ſhall fear the Lord and his goodneſs*, ſays the prophet, Hoſea iii. 5. If a man hath no faith at all of God's

goodneſs, no hope of his favour in Chriſt, where is his purity and holineſs? Nay, it is *he that hath this hope, that purifies himſelf, as he is pure.* I know not what experience you have, Sirs, but ſome of us know, that when our ſouls are moſt comforted and enlarged with the faith of God's favour through Chriſt, and with the hope of his goodneſs, then we have moſt heart to the duties; and when through unbelief, we have harſh thoughts of God, as an angry judge, then we have no heart to duties and religious exerciſes: and I perſuade myſelf, this is the experience of the ſaints in all ages.

But that this moral influence, which dying to the law, or covenant of works, hath upon living to God, or holineſs and ſanctification, may be further evident: let us conſider, how the law to the believer, having now loſt its legal or old covenant-form, and being put into a goſpel-form, and changed from the law of works into a covenant of grace, or the law in the hand of Chriſt; how, I ſay, every part of it now conſtrains the believer to obedience and ſanctification, in a moſt loving manner. The goſpel-law, or the law of grace, that now he is under, is a chariot paved with love. The law, in the hand of Chriſt, hath now another face, even a ſmiling face, in all the commands, promiſes, threatenings, and in the whole form thereof.

(1.) The *commands* of the law, in the hand of Chriſt, have loſt their old covenant-form, and are full of love. The command of the law of works is, *Do, and Live;* but in the hand of Chriſt, it is, *Live, and Do:* the command of the law of works, is, *Do*, or elſe *be damned:* but the law in the hand of Chriſt, is, I have delivered thee from hell, *therefore* DO: the command of the law of works is, *Do in thy own ſtrength;* but the law in the hand of Chriſt is, *I am thy ſtrength; My ſtrength ſhall be perfected in thy weakneſs*, therefore *Do.* The command is materially the ſame, but the *form* is different: the command of the law of works is, *Do perfectly*, that you may have eternal life; but now, in the hand of Chriſt, the form is, I have given thee eternal

eternal life in me, and by my doing; and therefore do as perfectly as you can, through my grace, till you come to a ſtate of perfection. The command, I ſay, is the ſame *materially;* for I do not join with theſe, who inſinuate, as if here leſs obedience were required than under the law of works: though leſs be accepted in theſe who have a perfect obedience in their Head, yet no leſs is required, though not in the old covenant-form. And as the command is *materially* the ſame, ſo the authority enjoining obedience is *originally* the ſame, yet vaſtly diſtinct; in that the command of the law is the command of God *out* of Chriſt, an abſolute God and Judge; but now, under grace, it is the command of a God *in* Chriſt, a Father in him: and ſure I am, that the authority of a commanding God is not leſſened, or loſt, that the command is now in the hand of Chriſt: Chriſt is God, co-equal and co-eſſential with the Father; and as God's authority to judge is not loſt, or leſſened, in that *all judgment is committed to the Son;* ſo his authority to command, is not loſt or leſſened, in that the law is in the hand of Chriſt: nay, it is not leſſened, but it is ſweetened, and made amiable, lovely, and deſirable to the believer, conſtraining him to obedience, in that the law is in the hand of his Head, his Lord, and his God.—— The end that he hath in commanding, and that they ſhould have in obeying, is now diſtinct, and different from what took place under the law of works: the end that he hath in commanding, is not to lay a heavy yoke of duties on their necks, to be born by their own ſtrength; nor, though performed by his ſtrength, to be a righteouſneſs for their juſtification, or a condition of life; but only to ſhew his *holy nature*, that he will not have a lawleſs people; to ſhew his *great grace*, that condeſcends to ſeek our ſervice; to *grace* and *beautify* his people, their chief happineſs conſiſting in a conformity to his will; that his people may get *good*, which is neceſſarily joined to duties, and connected thereto by the promiſes; that he may have ſomething to *commend* his people for; and that he may, without a compliment, have ground to ſay, *Well done, good and faithful*

faithful ſervants: and that by them he may have matter of *condemnation* againſt the reſt of the world, who walk not in his commandments. In a word, he commands, that his ſovereignty may be kept up, and the ſenſe thereof, in the hearts of his people; and that, by his word of command, he may, as many times he doth, convey ſtrength to do what he calls to; and in caſe of ſhortcoming, to force them out of themſelves, under a ſenſe of weakneſs and ſinfulneſs, in to Jeſus Chriſt, *the end of the law*, for ſtreugth to ſanctify, as well as for righteouſneſs to juſtify. For theſe, and ſuch like ends, does the Lord command.——And then the end that they ſhould have in obeying, is not to ſatisfy conſcience, nor to ſatisfy juſtice, to purchaſe heaven, or the like; but to glorify God, to edify our neighbour, and to teſtify our gratitude to God, and Chriſt, that hath delivered us from the law, as a covenant.

(2.) The *promiſes* of the law, in the hand of Chriſt, have loſt their old covenant-form, and are full of love. The *law of works* promiſes eternal life, as a reward of our doing, or obedience; and here the reward is a reward of *debt:* but the *law*, in the hand of Chriſt, promiſes a reward of *grace* to goſpel-obedience, eſpecially as it is an evidence of union to him, in whom all *the promiſes are Yea and Amen.* Eternal life was promiſed in the covenant of redemption to Chriſt, upon his perfect obedience, who paid that debt, when he came under the law of works for us; and now, eternal life being obtained to the believer in Chriſt, as the reward of Chriſt's obedience to the death, there is no other reward of debt that now takes place.——Rewards of grace are now come in faſhion, and this encourages the believer to live unto God, that in the way of goſpel-obedience, there is a gracious promiſe of ſweet communion and fellowſhip with God; *He that loves me, and keeps my commandments; I will love him, and manifeſt myſelf to him, and my Father will love him*, John xiv. 21. Here there is a fatherly promiſe of God's favour and familiarity with him; yea, there is a promiſe of heaven itſelf, in the way of goſpel-

pel-obedience, and ſanctification: a right to heaven is purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt, and the believer is the young heir of glory; but his poſſeſſion of heaven is ſuſpended till he be fit for it; till he do ſome buſineſs for his Father, and *be made meet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light.* This is ſweet encouragement the believer hath, to live unto God.

(3.) The *threatenings* of the law, in the hand of Chriſt, have loſt their old covenant-form, quality, and nature, and are now turned to threatenings out of love: there is no ſuch threatening now to the believer, *If thou do not, thou ſhalt die.* The penalty of the law of works is condemnation and eternal death, which the believer hath no cauſe to fear, being *dead to the law;* no more than a living wife needs to fear the threatening of her dead huſband: *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt. He that believes in him, ſhall never die.* Believers are under no threatening of eternal wrath, becauſe under grace. It is a high expreſſion that bleſſed Rutherford hath to this purpoſe, "The "goſpel, ſays he, forbids nothing under pain of dam-"nation to a juſtified believer, more than to Jeſus "Chriſt."——Though the ſins of believers deſerve hell, and the intrinſic demerit of ſin is ſtill the ſame; [yea, I think the ſins of believers being againſt ſo much love, and ſo many mercies, they deſerve a thouſand hells, where others deſerve one;] yet, being *dead to the law,* he hath no vindictive wrath to fear, the blood of Chriſt having quenched the fire of God's wrath, Rom. v. 9. *While we were ſinners, Chriſt died for us; and much more now being juſtified by his blood, we are ſaved from wrath through him;* and ſure he is not to fear that which God calls him to believe he is ſaved from: his ſlaviſh fear, therefore, is from unbelief, and weakens his hands in duties. But now the law, in the hand of Chriſt, hath threatnings and puniſhments, but they are fatherly and loving; a ſhort view of them you may read, Pſal. lxxxix. 30,—35. *If his children forſake my law, and walk not in my judgments: if they break my ſtatutes, and keep not my commandments:*

mandments; then will I viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquities with ſtripes; nevertheleſs my loving-kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail: my covenant will I not break.—Once have I ſworn by my holineſs, that I will not lie unto David, q. d. Though I will not ſend them to hell, nor deprive them of heaven, no more than I will break my great oath to my eternal Son; yet, like a father, I will chaſtiſe them; I will correct them for their faults; I will ſqueeze them in the mortar of affliction, and preſs out the corrupt juice of old Adam that is in them; yea, I will hide my face; I will deny them that communion and fellowſhip with me that ſometimes they had, and give them terror inſtead of comfort, and bitterneſs inſtead of ſweetneſs. A filial fear of theſe fatherly chaſtiſements will do more to influence the believer to holineſs, and obedience, than all the unbelieving fears of hell and wrath can do: fear, leaſt he want that ſweetneſs of God's preſence, which ſometimes he hath had, will make him ſay to his ſins and luſts, as the fig-tree in Jotham's parable, *Shall I leave my ſweetneſs, and be king over you?* O! ſhall I leave all the ſweetneſs that I have enjoyed with God, and take on with baſe luſts and idols! And hence, when the believer hath gone aſide and backſliden, what is it that brings him back to God? He finds the Lord breaking him many ways, and he reflects, through grace, upon this ſometimes, O! how am I deprived of theſe ſweet interviews that once I enjoyed? Therefore *I will go and return to my firſt Huſband, for then it was better with me than now.* Yea, his freedom from law-threatnings, and being only under fatherly correction, when he ſees this, it breaks his heart, and melts it more than all the fire of hell could do.—The ſlaviſh fear of vindictive wrath diſcourages him, weakens his hands in duties, and makes him run away from God: but the filial fear of God's fatherly wrath, which is kindly, is a motive of love that encourages him to his duty. Which of theſe motives think you will work up the believer to moſt obedience? *viz.* This legal one, *O! my wrathful Judge will ſend me to hell, if I do ſo and ſo;* or this goſpel one; *O! my God and Father*

Father in Chriſt Jeſus will be angry at me, and deny me his love-tokens? I ſuppoſe the former works upon enmity, and raiſes it, but this works upon love, and inflames it.

But here a queſtion may be moved, Ought not the believer to live unto God, even without reſpect to the threatening of fatherly chaſtiſement and puniſhment? To this we anſwer,

No doubt, the more perfect his obedience be, the better and the more like to the obedience of the ſaints in heaven, where no chaſtiſement is feared; but while he is here, he carries a body of ſin about him, and needs to be ſtirred up by fatherly correction. He ſhould indeed ſerve God purely out of love and reſpect to the command itſelf, and becauſe he commands it: but thus the matter ſtands, that as on the one hand, being perfect in his Head, Chriſt Jeſus, it is not his duty to have reſpect to what the law of works either promiſes, or threatens; ſo on the other hand, being imperfect in himſelf while here, it is his duty to have reſpect to what the law, in the hand of Chriſt, promiſes and threatens; which indeed is a loving reſpect, tending to advance holineſs.

(4.) The whole *form* of the law as a covenant of works, being thus altered, the law in the hand of Chriſt, is all love, all grace, and ſo influences the man to ſanctification. The man that is under the covenant of grace, he hath a principle of grace within him, ſtriving againſt ſin; he hath the Spirit of grace within him, cauſing him to walk in God's ſtatutes; he hath the promiſe of grace to be ſufficient for him: if ſin prevail, and pollute him, he hath daily acceſs to the fountain open for ſin and for uncleanneſs, to which he runs; if his backſlidings encreaſe, he hath Chriſt engaged by promiſe to heal his backſlidings: which, when he views by faith, it doth not encourage him to ſin, if he be in right exerciſe of his ſenſes, but draws him to his duty, like a cord of love, and brings him back to his kind Lord. In a word, being *dead to the law, he is married to Chriſt*, who is *like a green fig-tree*, from *whom all his fruit is found*.——Thus you ſee what *influence* a man's being *dead to the law*, hath upon

pon his *living unto God.* And ſo much for the fourth head propoſed.

V. The *fifth* thing in the method, was the *application*, which we ſhall eſſay in an uſe of *information*, *examination*, *lamentation*, and *exhortation.*

Is it ſo, that being *dead to the law*, in point of *juſtification*, is *neceſſary*, in order to *living unto God* in point of *ſanctification?* Then for *information*, hence we may ſee,

1. That the doctrine of the goſpel is not a doctrine of *licentiouſneſs*, or *carnal liberty*, however it be reproached in the world: and if the preachers thereof, who would bring off people from the law of works, and from their ſelf-righteouſneſs, be reproached, as if they were enemies to holineſs, I will venture to ſay it with confidence, in a place where falſehood ſhould be an abomination, that it is a *vile ſlander;* for whatever ſinful weakneſs and imperfection may cleave to the preaching or practice of theſe, who deſire to publiſh this goſpel-doctrine, yet the Lord God of gods is witneſs; yea, the Lord God of gods knows, and all Iſrael may know, and all whoſe eyes God enlightens ſhall know, that this doctrine of *dying to the law, in point of juſtification*, is a *doctrine according to godlineſs*, and the very means of holineſs itſelf, and of living unto God: if this be *Antinomianiſm*, I am content to be called an *Antinomian* *. But, we ſee who are indeed *Antinomians*,

* The riſe and ground of this injurious accuſation may be ſeen, in ſome meaſure, accounted for, Serm. IV. page 238.—The Baxterian *legal ſcheme* of doctrine had, by this time, ſpread itſelf abroad, and diffuſed its dangerous and pernicious influence and direful effects, not only among the clergy in England, but had even crept into many of the pulpits in Scotland: This paved the way for exhibiting the charge of *Antinomianiſm* againſt all thoſe miniſters who adhered to, and aſſiduouſly taught the *doctrine of grace;* eſpecially thoſe who maintained the *abſolute freedom of the covenant of grace;* the *unlimited grant that God hath made of Chriſt, and ſalvation with him to mankind;* the *neceſſity of becoming dead to the law as a covenant*, and *of faith to apprehend and appropriate Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs for ſalvation.* And though the *Marrow of Modern Divinity* was deſigned to vindicate the *doctrine of grace*, in oppoſition to Antinomian and Neonomian extremes; yet they who befriended this book,

Antinomians, and enemies to the law and holineſs; even all thoſe who oppoſe this doctrine, whereby we give the law all the honour imaginable; *Do we make void the law through faith; God forbid; yea, we eſtabliſh the law:* as a *covenant* we eſtabliſh it, while we preach Chriſt as *our righteouſneſs* for *juſtification:* and as a *rule of holineſs* we eſtabliſh it, while we preach Chriſt as *our ſtrength* for *ſanctification* of heart and life: and they that do not thus honour the law, do but diſgrace and diſhonour it, and are truly *Antinomians*, *i. e.* enemies to the law. And if this be called a *new ſcheme* of doctrine by way of reproach, though I confeſs it is a *new covenant ſcheme*, in oppoſition to that of the *old*, yet I will grant to no man that it is *new* otherwiſe; ſeeing it is not only as old as Paul here, but as old as the firſt publication of the covenant of grace in paradiſe; ſo that we ſee where it is, that the reproach of

book, eſpecially ſuch who appeared in defence thereof, when attacked and condemned by the Aſſembly, were accuſed with being *Antinomians*, enemies to the law and holineſs, friends to licentiouſneſs, and branded with introducing and venting *new ſchemes* of Divinity. Though it is a notour fact, and well known to many yet alive, that there were not greater friends in the whole church, to *evangelical Doctrine*, than thoſe who befriended the *Marrow Doctrine:* They were juſtly allowed to be firſt-rate Divines. It is true, indeed, they were enemies to *all previous legal qualifications, to be performed by us, in order to fit and qualify us for coming to, and cloſing with Chriſt.* And with reſpect to our worthy Author, it is obvious to every intelligent perſon, who either heard him preach, or have carefully peruſed his writings, that he had a peculiar talent in ſtating the difference between the law and the goſpel, and put a reſpectable honour upon, and paid a due regard to each of them; and that he conſtantly urged conformity to the law, as a rule of life: and aſſiduouſly inculcate the practice of holineſs ——Any who incline to ſee the juſtneſs of theſe obſervations, and have a complete view of this affair, may attain it, by peruſing the Marrow itſelf, with attention, and carefully adverting to the judicious Mr. Boſton's notes upon it; and the Brethren's Anſwers to the Aſſembly's Queries; and an Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace, by the Aſſociate Presbytery: In which Act, the Doctrine of Grace, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and ſet forth in our Standards, is aſſerted and vindicated from the errors vented againſt it: the Marrow doctrine freed from the charge of Antinomianiſm, laid againſt it by the Aſſembly, and ſhewn to be founded on the Scriptures, conſiſtent with our Standards, and agreeable to the ſentiments of other approved Divines; and the Act of Aſſembly condemning the Marrow, evinced to be injurious to the Doctrine of Grace, contrary to many paſſages of Scripture, and diametrically oppoſite to our Standards.

a *new ſcheme* ſhould be lodged.——I would have reproachers to mind what Paul ſays of this doctrine of his, Gal. i. 8. *If we, or an angel from heaven preach another goſpel, let him be accurſed.* Here is the doom of ſuch as preach another goſpel, which yet, ſays the apoſtle, is not another; but there are ſome that trouble the Lord's people, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt. To be *dead to the law*, is not to turn a looſe *Antinomian;* it is to *live unto God.*

2. Hence ſee the reaſon why the *devil* oppoſes the *doctrine of grace* ſo much, and cares not though the law, as a *covenant*, be never ſo much preached up, becauſe it is the goſpel-doctrine that tends only to true godlineſs, while the law and legal doctrine tends to keep men ſtrangers to the life of God. The devil cares not how much you be in duties, providing you keep off from Chriſt, who is *the end of the law for righteouſneſs;* for then he knows you would be holy alſo: but he is an unholy devil; and therefore he oppoſes the goſpel, and its doctrine. The devil knows that he hath faſt hold of you, ſo long as you cleave to the law; but that he hath loſt you, if once you have laid hold on Chriſt: for, if once you get Chriſt for *juſtification*, as having fulfilled the righteouſneſs of the law *for you*, then you will alſo get him for *ſanctification*, to fulfil the righteouſneſs of the law *in you.* The devil knows, that though in ſeeming holineſs, you ſhould be transformed to an angel of light, like himſelf, yet you ly under the heavy vengeance of God, and curſe of the law, and under the power of ſin too, ſo long as you are under the law. Therefore,

3. Hence ſee the reaſon why the moſt part of the world are *living to ſin, living to ſelf, living to the world, living to the devil;* Why? becauſe they are not *dead to the law.* They only that are dead to the law, do live unto God; and ſurely then, they that are alive to the law, and not dead to it, they are living to the devil. No man that is alive to the law, can be a holy man: nay, what is the reaſon of all the ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs, all the profanity and wickedneſs of the generation! Why? people are ſtrangers to Chriſt,

Chriſt, and are ſtill under the power, the irritating power of the law, which is *the ſtrength of ſin.* The world is crying up *morality*, as if the preachers of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs were enemies to the moral law, as a rule of holineſs; and behold, in the righteous judgment of God, there was never a generation left to greater *immoralities* than the preſent; a juſt puniſhment of mens deſpiſing Chriſt, and his law-biding righteouſneſs, through the faith whereof only true holineſs, and conformity to the law can be attained. O when the believer comes to ſee by faith, that he hath nothing to do with the law as a covenant, this makes him delight in the law of God, as a rule of holineſs; when he ſees he hath not a farthing of debt to pay, either to the precept, or threatening of the law as a covenant, becauſe that debt was paid by Chriſt's obedience to the death, this makes him find himſelf under the moſt grateful obligations to ſerve the Lord, in obedience to his law, as a rule; yea, under greater obligation than ever Adam was in the ſtate of innocency: but the reſt of the world, that are utter ſtrangers to this freedom, they are in bondage to the law, and ſo in bondage to their luſts.

4. Hence we may ſee the neceſſity of a *law-work of conviction* and *humiliation*, and how much of it is neceſſary, even as much as will render the perſon *dead to the law*, that he may *live unto God.* So much conviction is neceſſary, as will unbottom the man from the covenant of works, and make him diſclaim his own righteouſneſs, and make him cry out, *Unclean, unclean; guilty, guilty;* that thus his ſelf-confidence may be killed, and he, *through the law, may be dead to the law*, and may come under the covert of the blood of the Lamb, under the covert of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for juſtification; that, being *dead to the law, he may live unto God.* While men are without this law-work, rendering them dead to the law, they are at beſt but eſtabliſhing a righteouſneſs of their own, which will keep them out of heaven, as much as their ſins will do. And this makes the gate

of heaven indeed to be a *ſtrait gate*, becauſe *many ſeek to enter in*, in a legal way, *and ſhall not be able*, Luke xiii. 24.; and this makes the way broad that leads unto hell, ſo broad, that it lets in all that are out of Chriſt, but the openly wicked, and the ſelf-righteous. There is but one way to heaven, and that is Chriſt; but there are many ways to hell: eſpecially theſe two; ſome walk in a more cleanly way of ſelf-righteouſneſs, and others in a more dirty way of open wickedneſs; but both meet together at the end of the way, and that is the centre of damnation. O what need, then, is there of a law-work, to convince the wicked of their ſins, and the ſelf-righteouſneſs of their need of a better righteouſneſs, that, being *dead to the law, they may live unto God.*

5. Hence we may ſee whence it is, that believers live ſo *little to God*, and are *ſo untender*, and *unholy*: it flows from this, that they are not *perfectly dead to the law*, nor *perfectly freed from it*: much of a legal ſpirit remains; the more that takes place, the more unholy they are. Tho' they have ſhaken off, in converſion, the authority of the covenant of works as a prince, which is a great matter; yet they are many times under the authority thereof as an uſurper, and by reaſon of the old legal nature, which is but partly renewed in time: and hence the voice of the law ſpeaks many times in the believer's conſcience, and he is terrified at the voice of it; for it preſumes to curſe him, and to deſire him to do, or elſe be damned; and ſo it weakens his hands, and makes him think God is a hard maſter: whereas the voice of the goſpel in his conſcience, is the ſtill, calm voice, ſweetly intreating, and alluring the heart to its obedience, and conveying a ſecret ſtrength to obey, and making the ſoul to delight in the Lord's way; *Draw me, we will run after thee*, Song i. 3. But what ſhould the believer do, when the law comes to charge him, and command him to obey upon pain of death, or to curſe him for his diſobedience? Why, he may even ſay in the words of Luther, who, upon the point of juſtification, was as found as any ſince his day; "O "law, Chriſt is my righteouſneſs, my treaſure, and my "work;

"work; I confeſs, O law, that I am neither godly nor "righteous, but yet this I am ſure of, that he is godly "and righteous for me." His obedience anſwered both the godlineſs required in the firſt table of the law, and the righteouſneſs required in the ſecond table. The believer may ſay to the law, O law, I am dead to thee, and married to another Huſband, even Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore, cannot bring forth any children, any fruit, any acts of obedience to thy threatening commands: but, behold, I run to my ſweet Huſband, who hath ſugared and ſweetened the law, with a goſpel-dreſs and form; which, giving ſtrength to obey, and ſhewing the believer's freedom from the wrath of God, "encourages the believer, as our Confeſſion of Faith "ſpeaks, being free from the curſe of the moral law, "and delivered from everlaſting damnation, to yield "obedience to God;" not out of ſlaviſh fear, but a child-like love, and a willing mind.

6. Hence ſee how it is, that *holineſs is neceſſary to ſalvation;* why, it is the very life of the juſtified man, being *dead to the law, to live unto God:* he is not holy that he may be juſtified, but juſtified that he may be holy. I do not here meddle with the queſtion, *Whether regeneration or juſtification be firſt in order of nature?* For I am ſpeaking mainly, not of habitual holineſs, or the firſt habit of grace, but of actual holineſs; whether internal in the exerciſe of grace, or external in the performance of duty. Thus holineſs, I ſay, is neceſſary to ſalvation, as being the native, neceſſary, and inſeparable fruit of juſtification, or dying to the law: it is the juſtified man's way of living, or walking towards heaven. They that turn the grace of God into wantonneſs, they pervert the right end of grace, which *teacheth us to deny ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts:* and they that give up with the law as a rule of holineſs, becauſe they are, or think they are delivered from the law, as a covenant of works, they pervert the very end of that freedom, which is that they may *live unto God:* and no doubt, many among believers themſelves are in danger of this ſin: for I know no ſin, but a believer is liable to it, if he be left to himſelf; and becauſe many

ny of them abuſe grace, therefore God keeps the law-ſpur at their ſide; for it is with many, as with dull lazy horſes, ſo long as the ſpur is in their ſide, they ride quickly; but when that is removed, they become dull and heavy, and are ready to ſtand ſtill: ſo, while the law exacted rigid obedience, and threatened damnation and hell, they were diligent, and durſt not neglect a duty; they were tender in their walk: but now, being delivered from this ſpur, that was daily pricking their ſides, and ſeeing that Chriſt hath ſatisfied the law, which now can neither juſtify, nor condemn them, they imagine they have no more to fear; and ſo they ſin the more, and live ſecurely, inſtead of *living ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly.* This is a *turning the grace of God into wantonneſs*, and a perverting of the very end of grace: and if any child of God here be guilty, remember, that your heavenly Father will not let you paſs unpuniſhed; though he pardon your ſins, yet he will *take vengeance on your inventions.* It is to prevent this wantonneſs in ſome, that the ſpur is kept long in their ſide; and they are kept many days and years, perhaps, under many legal ſhakings, fears, doubts, and tremblings, attaining to very little of any chearful goſpel-obedience; for the law cannot work that. And this leads me to another inference.

7. Hence, from this doctrine, we may ſee, that the law can neither *juſtify*, nor *ſanctify a ſinner*: it cannot *juſtify* him, for he muſt be *dead* to it in point of juſtification; it cannot *ſanctify* him, for he never *lives unto God*, till he be *dead to the law.* On the one hand, *By the deeds of the law, no fleſh living can be juſtified*: Why? Becauſe you are *dead in ſin by nature*, and can do nothing that the law requires, in the way that it requires it; and though you would do any thing, yet your doing is imperfect; but the law requires perfection: yea, though you could obey the law perfectly for the time to come, that will not make amends for former faults; there muſt be ſatisfaction; yea, ſuppoſe it were poſſible that you could do all this, and that from your cradle to your grave you never ſinned;

and

and were as free from original ſin, and had as good a nature as ever Pelagius thought any had, and ſtrength to keep the law, and did actually keep it perfectly from your youth up; yet the law of works is broken in Adam; in him we all ſinned, and that one ſin is enough to damn the whole world, and would do ſo, if Chriſt did not redeem from the guilt thereof.—— On the other hand, the law cannot *ſanctify* any, it works wrath; and *when the commandment comes, ſin revives:* it is *the miniſtration of death* every way, as I ſaid before. But here a queſtion may be moved, *If the law can neither juſtify nor ſanctify, what uſe is it for?* We may anſwer, It is for many noble uſes, both to the regenerate and unregenerate. To the *unregenerate*, it is of uſe to *conviction of ſin;* to *break up the fallow-ground of the heart;* to be *a ſchool maſter to lead to Chriſt*, by convincing him of his abſolute need of a Surety, and of his undone ſtate without Chriſt.— And to the *regenerate*, it is of uſe to make them highly eſteem Chriſt, whoſe righteouſneſs anſwers the law in its commands and threatenings both; and it ſerves to give him a daily conviction of ſin, that the man may more and more prize the pardon of ſin, and ſeek daily in to the Lord, for pardoning and ſanctifying grace: alſo to let him ſee the intrinſical demerit of ſin, while he ſees hell threatened againſt it in that covenant; and thereupon may fear to offend that God, who *is a conſuming fire*, but rather that he may *worſhip him with reverence and godly fear:* not with a ſlaviſh fear, that he ſhall be ſent to hell, which is impoſſible; that is not his duty; he may have the over-awing fear and apprehenſion of hell, but ſhould not have a ſlaviſh fear of it: this fear of it he ſhould not have, but the faith of it he ought to have, and many times needs to have it, to terrify him from ſin, which of its own nature, leads to deſtruction; as a man that is bound with a great chain to a ſtake on the top of a high tower, though he cannot but know, that by reaſon of the chain, he is ſure enough; yet when he looks over the battlement, and ſees the dreadful precipice, it ſcars him from going near the edge of the battlement. It

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is certain, that believers, when they know not that they are under grace, may unwarrantably apply to themſelves the ſentence of the law; unwarrantably, I ſay, becauſe *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt;* yet God may, for holy ends, ſuffer his conſcience to be troubled with the fear of condemnation, that being humbled, he may make the more uſe of Chriſt for righteouſneſs and ſtrength. In a word, the commands of the law, not formally as a covenant, but materially as a rule of life, ſerve to be an active directory for his walk; and *whoever walks according to this rule, peace be on them, and on all the Iſrael of God.* Thus it is of manifold uſe, though it can neither juſtify nor ſanctify, which only the grace of the goſpel can do.

8. Hence ſee what a *myſtery to the world religion is,* and the *difference betwixt God's judgment and man's:* man thinks, to be *dead to the law,* is the way to *live in ſin;* but God's word tells us, That to be *dead to the law,* is the way to *live unto God.* Why? here is a myſtery, a holy riddle; and we are decrying holineſs, when we preach in this apoſtolical ſtrain? God forbid; nay, we declare unto you, in the name of God, that the way to be truly holy, is to quit with your falſe legal holineſs; the way to be truly righteous, is to quit your legal righteouſneſs; yea, I tell you, man, that even in point of ſanctification, *Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, you ſhall not enter into the kingdom of God:* and you know, they made *long prayers,* they *faſted twice a week,* and *gave alms of all that they poſſeſt;* and ſome of them were, *touching the law, blameleſs,* and could ſay, *All theſe things have I done from my youth up;* and yet I ſay, Unleſs your holineſs exceed their holineſs, you ſhall never enter into the kingdom of God: and, till your unrighteous righteouſneſs, and unholy holineſs, be cried down in your heart, and the perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt cried up, true holineſs you ſhall never have.——Was Chriſt a friend to publicans and harlots? or, did he approve of their ſins, when he ſaid, to theſe Phariſees, *Pub-*

Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you! Matt. xxi. 31. O beware of ſuch blaſphemous thoughts of a holy Jeſus; nay, ſo far from that, that we may hence gather his abhorrence of their ſins; only he would give us to know, that if ſin keep them out of heaven, as much and more will ſelf-righteouſneſs keep out the Phariſee, who muſt be rid of his righteouſneſs, as well as his ſins, before he get there.—O but religion is a myſtery! to be *dead to the law*, in order to *live unto God.*

9. Hence we may ſee the *miſerable ſtate of theſe that are alive*, and the *happy ſtate of theſe that are dead to the law.* Their ſtate is miſerable who are alive to the law; for, though they have a *name to live*, yet *they are dead;* legally dead, bound over to the wrath of God, and under the curſe of the law; ſpiritually dead in ſin, having no holineſs, no godlineſs, acceptable to God through Jeſus Chriſt. If they be any way awakened, and ſeeking life by the law, and the works thereof, what a madneſs is this *to ſeek the living among the dead?* or to ſeek help where it cannot be had? God hath laid all our help upon Chriſt; and it is impoſſible to find juſtification or ſanctification any where elſe.——But on the other hand, their ſtate is happy who are dead to the law; for though they be dead, yet they live; they live a life of juſtification, and a life of ſanctification thereupon; being *dead to the law, they live unto God.* O what a mercy is it, if God hath awakened your conſciences, convinced you of ſin and ſelf-righteouſneſs, and brought you off from the law! You ſee your extreme guilt, vileneſs, baſeneſs, and wickedneſs; and it may be are groaning under the ſenſe thereof: but God may have a glorious deſign in this, to bring you more and more off from the law, and from any confidence in the fleſh, that you may build upon a better foundation, and be married to a better huſband, even to Jeſus Chriſt, that *you may bring forth fruit unto God.*

10. Hence ſee the *malignity* of a *legal ſpirit:* if we muſt be *dead to the law*, that we may *live unto God:* then a legal ſpirit and temper muſt be a wicked and

ungodly ſpirit: it is an *ignorant* ſpirit; if they were not *ignorant of God's righteouſneſs*, they would never *eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own:* but they are ignorant of the perfection of his law, the terror of his juſtice, the ſeverity of his tribunal, and of their own natural weakneſs and wickedneſs, otherwiſe they would not dare to make any thing a ground of their acceptance with God, except the blood and righteouſneſs of his Son. It is a *proud* ſpirit, that will not let *grace* be exalted, but puts *ſelf* in the throne of Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs. It is a *filthy* and *abominable* ſpirit, and pollutes the man more and more; and God abhors it, as that which contradicts his moſt glorious plot. And it is a *damning* ſpirit, if it be not removed; *For the wicked ſhall be turned into hell:* and this man continues wicked ſtill, even under the pretence of holineſs; he is wicked and ungodly ſtill, for he lives to himſelf, but not to God; for it is only theſe that are *dead to the law*, who *live unto God.*

Uſe *ſecond*, Of *examination.* Try your *ſtate* then, man, woman: you ſhould try after, as well as before a communion: and there are two things you ſhould try here, 1. Whether you be *dead to the law* in point of *juſtification?* 2. Whether you be *living to the law*, or *living to God*, in point of *ſanctification?* Two as neceſſary points as are in all divinity, and ſuch as are of the utmoſt concern in time, and through eternity.

Firſt, Try whether you be *dead to the law* in point of *juſtification.* I might here give you marks of theſe that are *alive to the law*, and then marks of theſe that are *dead to the law;* but ſeeing theſe will coincide, I join them together. I ſhall not multiply evidences; but you may try by theſe following.

1. The man that is *dead to the law*, hath got a *ſight of holineſs* in the glaſs of the law, and of his *natural legal temper.* Some think they have a good heart to God, and they can do ſo and ſo; but the believer dead to the law, he ſees his heart, the worſt piece in or about him; and that he cannot believe, he cannot repent, he cannot mortify ſin; corruption is like the giants

giants of Anak. The man ſees he is vile, with Job: *Behold I am vile!* Vile in every duty; in praying, communicating; *Behold I am vile!* He ſees himſelf, and he ſees his own legal temper.——The man that is *alive to the law*, never ſees his *legal temper*, nor his ſtrong inclination to ſelf-righteouſneſs: the believer ſees and finds ſomething of this, even after he is made a goſpel-ſaint; but the Legaliſts never ſee it. What, ſay they, would you have us Papiſts? Bleſſed be God, we are better inſtructed; we have no merit, our righteouſneſs is rags: and yet, after all, there is a ſecret truſting in their own righteouſneſs.——Hath it ever been one exerciſe to you, how to be rid of your ſins? and another, how to be rid of your righteouſneſs?

2. The man that is *dead to the law*, is *tired* and *wearied* out of it. Perhaps he hath been convinced of ſin; and thereupon falling to the law, to this and the other duty; O I deſerve hell, for my ſin is great; well, he endeavours to make a mends, and to find peace; and ſo he runs to prayer and preaching, thinking he will get peace; he repents, he reſolves; and wo to the man that finds all his peace there without going further.——But, behold, the man whom God ſhews mercy to, he goes on in theſe duties, but finds no peace, no reſt, no ſatisfaction; he is tired out of it: his ſoul ſinks with diſcouragement, and languiſhes and hangs down the head: and God thus unbottoms the man of himſelf.——Whereas, he that is *alive to the law*, he that takes up his reſt and comfort in his duty; he hath the fear of wrath to come, and then he runs to duty; the duty gives him eaſe; he is relieved; all is well: as a huſband comforts his diſtreſſed wife, ſo obedience to the law comforts him, and the law heals him: it is the law that throws him down, and it is the law that raiſes him up again. But the man that is *dead to the law*, though the law terrify, yet it is not the law that ſatisfies him again.

3. The man that is *dead to the law*, he knows what it is to *act from Chriſt*, *as his principle*; and *to him*, as

his end: he knows what it is to perform duty from a borrowed ſtrength. The Legaliſt may indeed ſpeak ſoundly, and ſay, He can do nothing of himſelf without Chriſt; and yet he reads, prays, preaches, hears, communicates, and does all, as if he had the power in his own hand. Let a man have never ſuch an orthodox head, if he be not a believer in Chriſt, he is an Arminian and Pelagian all over: he knows not his own weakneſs; he looks not up for immediate influences. And as ſelf is his principle, ſo to ſelf he acts as his end; as he that is joined to Chriſt brings forth children, or fruit unto Chriſt; ſo he that is joined to the law, brings forth children to the law: he does duty, it may be, to huſh the clamours of conſcience, and give it eaſe; to keep himſelf out of hell, for he hath no will to be damned; and for the like ends.——The believer being *dead to the law*, cannot perform duty, but by borrowed ſtrength; he can do nothing till a gale of the Spirit come; he cannot bring forth children, till the Spirit of God beget them in his ſoul: no, no; every act of grace flows from a creating power: and when he acts, the love of Chriſt eſpecially, and deſire of communion and fellowſhip with God conſtrains him; and the glory of God in Chriſt is his great end.

4. The believer, that is *dead to the law*, he hath *vilifying thoughts* of all he does: the Legaliſt overvalues his duties; *Wherefore have we faſted, and thou haſt not ſeen? Wherefore have we prayed, and thou haſt not heard?* They challenge God as he were unjuſt, for not giving them what they merit: *God, I thank thee*, ſaid the Phariſee, *I am not as other men:* it was like a proud boaſting of what he had done. But let the believer ſpend days and nights in prayer, and that with much liberty and enlargement, yet the iſſue of the work is, *O my righteouſneſs is filthy rags, a menſtruous cloth!* Wo to me, If I be not found in Chriſt, for my beſt duties deſerve damnation; I find my praying, my worſhipping, my commmunicating full of atheiſm, unbelief, formality, and hypocriſy.—The Legaliſt overrates his duties: he thinks more of what he hath done

done, than of what Chriſt hath done; and more of his praying on earth than of Chriſt's pleading in heaven: he thinks more of his tears than of Chriſt's blood: he is proud of his humility, and never duly humbled.

5. The believer that is *dead to the law*, ſo far as he is dead thereto, his *complaints* and his *comforts* move in a *goſpel-channel*. The Legaliſt will complain more for want of holineſs, than for want of Chriſt: ſeeing he hath taken up with a ſelf-righteouſneſs, it is his all, it is his happineſs, it is his huſband, it is his God; and when it is wanting, he cannot but be troubled. But the language of the man dead to the law is, O for Chriſt! O for a day of power! O to be wrapt up in the covenant of grace, to get an omnipotent power, determining me to comply with the goſpel-offer! His comforts move in a goſpel-channel.——But the Legaliſt finds comfort in law-works, even in all his extremities in time: In the proſpect of trouble, what comforts him? Even this, that he hath done many good duties; he wraps up himſelf in a garment of his own weaving. Upon challenges of conſcience, what comforts him, and gives him peace? He even covers himſelf with the ſame robe. In the proſpect of judgment, what comforts him, and gives him peace? Why, he hopes God will be merciful to him, becauſe he hath had a good profeſſion, and ſaid many good prayers, and done many good duties. But, O ſorry peace-maker. The only thing that gives a believer peace and eaſe, in theſe caſes, is the law-biding righteouſneſs of Chriſt, under which he deſires to ſhroud himſelf: he flees to the blood of Chriſt, ſaying, O I am undone, unleſs my ſoul be wrapt up in the mantle of Chriſt's perfect righteouſneſs; *I deſire to be found in him*: upon this righteouſneſs of Jeſus do I venture my ſoul; I have no ſhift but this.——The Legaliſt, I ſaid, comforts himſelf in all his extremities with the law, till the extremity come, and then he finds himſelf cheated, miſerably deceived: and hence, O what a mercy is it, that the Lord drains a man of his legal comfort, that he may unhinge him off the law, and off his

his ſelf-confidence! Oft-times, when God is bringing him his elect, he makes all the common work they had before to diſappear. It may be, they had a profeſſion, were morally ſerious, they had zeal, prayed with life, heard with affection; but behold now, all the ſtreams of common influences are dried up; the poor ſoul finds he cannot pray, he cannot ſhed a tear, though he ſhould be caſt into hell: yea, he cannot think a right thought, though it ſhould bring him to heaven; yea, he finds his heart hardened like a devil, and his mind bemiſted with the darkneſs of hell.—Why? this is all in love to induce him to relinquiſh himſelf, abandon the law as a covenant, and flee in unto and embrace the dear Son of God.

6. The believer that is *dead to the law*, is content to have his *righteouſneſs tried*, and *compared with the perfect law*. As Chriſt is the *Lord his righteouſneſs*, and this he knows is ſufficient to anſwer all the demands and commands of the law, and he is not aſhamed of this righteouſneſs, but glories in it; ſo as to the works of holineſs, whatever ſhortcoming he is ſenſible of, yet he is content to be tried with the cleareſt light. Let omniſciency deſcend, and make a critical ſearch; *Search me, O God, and ſee if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlaſting.* I do not love to die with a lie in my right-hand: let all the inward corners of my heart be laid open before me: I am ſatisfied to know if I have a lawful huſband, or not; if Chriſt be my huſband, or not: he is content to be tried.—But the Legaliſt, the man that is *alive to the law*, a ſearching ſermon is uneaſy to him; a goſpel-ſermon he cannot abide; a narrow trial he cannot endure; he thinks that the miniſter is too impartial to caſt us all to hell; he hath ſtolen goods, and therefore dreads the light. Yea,

7. The man that is *dead to the law* he hath got a *ſoul-humbling ſight*, and *ſaving view* of the *glory of Chriſt's righteouſneſs*, that made him quit with all his legal rags, as loſs and dung; even as the ſtars evaniſh out of ſight when the ſun ariſes. O hath Chriſt's glory ever ſhined

ed into your heart, man, woman, and made you ſee thouſands of worlds to be nothing to him; thouſands of righteouſneſſes of men and angels, to be nothing to his? Have you ſeen an utter impoſſibility of obtaining God's favour by any righteouſneſs of yours? and ſuch a ſure ground of obtaining God's favour here, that your ſoul hath been made to renounce all other ways of acceptance; and to ſee, admire, and rejoice in the glory of this way; and to approve it, as a device worthy of God, and ſuitable to you? And have you found reſt here? It is good.——The Legaliſt is a ſtranger to ſuch ſaving views of the glory of Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs: having never got *the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt.*

8. The man that is *dead to the law*, is in love with the *doctrine of the goſpel; How beautiful upon the mountains, to them, are the feet of theſe that preach the glad-tidings of peace!* Whereas he that is *alive to the law*, he always ſuſpects the doctrine of the goſpel, as if it were leading him away from the law, and away from holineſs. Here is a mark that may well find out a phariſaic generation; they ſuſpect the doctrine of Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs, as if it were a doctrine tending to licentiouſneſs, and oppoſition to the law, a ſign they never felt the power of the goſpel upon their hearts, otherwiſe they would feel the revelation of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, from faith to faith, to be *the power of God to their ſalvation;* they would find, that never are they ſo much diſpoſed to holy duties, as when they are under the influences of the ſpirit of faith, diſcovering the glory of Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs, to them. But an ignorant generation, that knows not the power and virtue of the goſpel, ſtill ſuſpects it as contrary to the law, this was the falſe charge againſt Chriſt of old, and againſt Stephen Acts vi. 18. and againſt Paul, from which therefore he many times vindicates himſelf. See Acts xviii. 13.

9. The man that is *dead to the law*, can, in ſome meaſure, put a difference betwixt *Chriſt* and a *frame*:—whereas, he that is *alive to the law*, can never diſtinguiſh between Chriſt in duty, and a frame in duty. I ſuppoſe

poſe this is a hard queſtion, *How ſhall we know the difference betwixt Chriſt in duty, and a frame in duty?* I will anſwer, in a word, The man that hath only a frame in duty, and not Chriſt in it, he is only pleaſed with his frame, his tears, his enlargements; he makes that his righteouſneſs; he is content with that, and exalted with that; and now thinks all is well: but he that hath Chriſt in duty, and not a frame only, he is ready to cry, O I would have Chriſt! tears will not do the turn; my own heart hath deceived me a thouſand times; I find my tears do not waſh me, my frame does not ſanctify me: this flowing of affection may be but a natural thing; it will not do; it is Chriſt I want; nothing but his blood can waſh me: nothing but this blood can pacify his conſcience; nothing but ſome views of Chriſt can give him ſolid quiet. A ſweet frame may indeed be the chariot, in which Chriſt may ride towards the ſoul; but the goſpel believer is not ſo much taken up with the chariot, as with the glorious King that rides in it.

10. The man that is *dead to the law*, is *dead to ſin*: Sin hath not dominion over him: beeauſe he is *not under the law, but under grace.* The views of Chriſt are of a transforming nature; *Beholding his glory, we are changed.* It is true, here the believer fears moſt of all, becauſe of his ſhortcoming in point of ſanctification, and mortification of ſin, becauſe he finds iniquity prevailing againſt him: and how is it true, that ſin hath not dominion over him, he not being *under the law, but under grace!* Why, ſin hath no righteous nor lawful dominion over believers; the firſt huſband is dead, and they are married to Chriſt the ſecond huſband; and therefore they are not debtors to the fleſh; tho' ſtill the fleſh craves them to obey it, yet it hath no juſt power ſo to do. Sin's juſt authority is exauctorated; and Chriſt, by ſatisfying the law, *which is the ſtrength of ſin*, hath *condemned ſin in the fleſh.* Sin hath a ſort of right to reign in wicked men, and theſe that are under the law; but none in the believer, who is delivered from the law, which is *the ſtrength of ſin.* Though it actually exerciſe authority, yet it is but an uſurped authority:

thority: as ſin hath no power nor authority to condemn the ſoul that is in Chriſt; ſo it hath no authority to reign; and *ſin ſhall never reign unto death* over them, Rom. v. 21. And the believer that hath caſt off the authority of ſin, as being no more his lawful king, may complain of its unjuſt oppreſſion, and plead with a righteous God, that the power of ſin may be more and more broken, and ſo it ſhall be.—But the *legaliſt*, that is *alive to the law*, in regard that he is both under the commanding and condemning power of the law; he is alſo under the commanding and condemning power of ſin. The law commands him, and he obeys it as his lord; and ſin commands him alſo, and he obeys it too, and makes his legal duties a plaiſter to cure his conſcience of his ſin: like Lewis XI. of France, who would ſwear a bloody oath, and for a pardon kiſs a crucifix; and ſwear again, and then kiſs it over again; and ſo runs the round. However, the believer is delivered from the power of the law, and the power of ſin too; having caſt off the law as covenant, and finding nothing to ſatisfy and ſtill his conſcience, but the blood and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, that ſatisfies divine juſtice; as in this way he finds reſt from the curſe of the law, ſo alſo ſome reſt from the rule and dominion of ſin: the faith of God's love in Chriſt, does purify his heart, and kill his natural enmity, inſomuch that he can atteſt, to his ſweet experience, that the faith of the love of God in Chriſt, is ſo far from leading him to licentiouſneſs of life, or encouraging lazineſs, that he finds it the hotteſt fire in the world, to melt his heart for ſin; and the ſtrongeſt cord in the world, to bind him to duty, while the love of God is ſhed abroad upon him.—— Try by theſe things if you be *dead to the law*.—— In a word, if you be dead to the law, then you will be *living unto God; I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God*. He is led ſweetly to the law as a rule of life.

But here it may be enquired, *How ſhall I know if I be living unto God?* This leads me to the other part of the examination.

Secondly, Try if you be *living unto God*. Having enlarged ſo much upon the preceeding head, and having offered ſeveral particulars upon this head already in the doctrinal part, which may be improved by way of trial; therefore I will offer you but theſe two marks of this.

1. If you be *living unto God*, then the *Spirit of God* will be the *chief principle* of your life; *The water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing up to everlaſting life*, John iv. 14. The man hath not only the *water* within him, the graces of the Spirit; but the *well* itſelf, the Spirit himſelf dwelling in him. And as we know a ſpring-well, by ſeeing the water bullering and bubbling up; ſo a man may know he hath the Spirit, by the ſpringing and flowing out of this water now and then. None have a life unto God, but theſe that have the Spirit of Chriſt in them, cauſing them to *walk in his ſtatutes*; for, where the Spirit of life is, he is a Spirit of faith, and a Spirit of love; a Spirit of faith, leading the man to the *obedience of faith*; which ſets him to duty from the authority of God, and in a dependence upon Chriſt, both as his ſtrength for aſſiſtance, and as his righteouſneſs for acceptance, in the performance thereof: a Spirit of love, leading the man to the obedience of love; and this obedience makes a man ſerve like a ſon, and not like a ſlave; and makes the ſervice ſweet and pleaſant; *This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous*, 1 John v. 3.——This makes the believer's obedience, while he lives unto God, a myſtery to the world, that reckon it a burden to keep the Sabbath, a burden to wait on ordinances, a burden to perform duties: Why? on the other hand, when the believer is mounted up in the chariot of love, indeed it is a burden to him to leave off duty; it is a burden to him to leave ordinances; it is a burden to him to think of going back to the world again: Why? the matter is, he is about the obedience of love, which makes the commands of God not grievous, but delicious. Try your obedience, and living to God, by this principle of it, the Spirit of God

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as a Spirit of faith and love, leading to the obedience of faith and love.

2. If you be *living unto God*, then the *glory of God* will be the *chief end* of your life. But here a queſtion may be propounded, *How ſhall I know, if the glory of God be my chief end in my obedience?* Indeed it is a material queſtion. I will juſt offer a thought upon it. If the glory of God be the chief end of your life, then you will have a continual conflict with *ſelf*, and how to get ſelf-ends mortified. O! I ſee *ſelf* creeping in upon me, in all my preaching, praying, communicating; how ſhall I get this enemy killed? Here *the fleſh luſts againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe two are contrary the one to the other.*—The believer finds a war here againſt ſelf, as his greateſt enemy; and it is his joy, and the triumph of his heart, when he gets *ſelf* daſhed to the ground, and debaſed; when *the loftineſs thereof is brought down, and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in him.*——The man that hath God's glory as his chief end, he can ſometimes trample even his *own happineſs under his feet*, in a manner, when it comes in competition with the glory of God in Chriſt: the glory of God is of more worth than ten thouſand heavens; and therefore the ſelf-denied believer, before the divine glory ſhould ſink, would venture his all, though he had a thouſand lives; *Blot me out of thy book*, ſays Moſes; *Let me be accurſed*, ſays Paul; and all was, that God might be glorified, that Chriſt might be magnified, and have a glorious name in the world. There were ſome things indeed extraordinary in that meaſure that Moſes and Paul attained to; but there may be ſomething like it, I think, tho' in a ſmaller meaſure, that believers may know in their experience: O! whatever ſhould become of me, let thy name be glorified; let Chriſt have a numerous train to praiſe him to eternity; let me decreaſe, and him increaſe; let him be exalted, tho' I ſhould be for ever abaſed: and if it might contribute to his mounting of the throne, let me be even the foot-ſtool on which he may aſcend.——The man prefers *Chriſt's public intereſt* before his *own private*

intereſt; If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem, let my right-hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not Jeruſalem above my chief joy, Pſalm cxxxvii. 5, 6. In a word, the man that lives to God, as his chief end, he *acts in duties*, becauſe God is thereby *honoured* and *glorified;* and he hates ſin in himſelf and others, becauſe God is thereby diſhonoured.

Finally, If you be *living unto God*, your *life*, your *obedience*, will be influenced by the *grace* of the *new covenant*, being dead to the law, or to the old covenant: But of this I have ſpoken at large, on the fourth general head.——Thus much for the *trial*.

The *third uſe* may be for *lamentation* over, together with *reproof* of, all legaliſts, both doctrinal and practical.

1*ſt*, As to the *doctrinal legaliſts*, we might bewail, and refute the *legal ſchemes* that take place in the world. I name theſe two.

1. The *Popiſh ſcheme*, denying the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs. The imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt is blaſphemed by the church of Rome; they call it *an affectitious, imaginary air; a putative righteouſneſs*; contrary to the very ſtrain of our apoſtle in his epiſtles. They talk of a twofold juſtification: Their *firſt* juſtification is that, whereby an unjuſtified man becomes juſtified, or a wicked man becomes godly; where they confound juſtification and ſanctification.——The *ſecond* is that, whereby a man, already righteous, becomes more and more righteous, more and more holy. We know no juſtification, but one juſtification by faith, in the day of cloſing with Chriſt; laying hold upon the blood of Chriſt, *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I ſay, his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus*, Rom. iii. 25, 26. It is a complete righteouſneſs, we have it all at once; and it is not within

within us, but without us: it is in Chriſt *inherently*, but in us *imputatively*. They tell us, that we are not juſtified by the works of the ceremonial law, but by the works of the moral law: they tell us, that we are not juſtified by perfect obedience, but by imperfect; and, by an *acceptilation*, it is looked on by God as perfect: and, in a word, they acquaint us, that we are juſtified, not meritoriouſly, and ſimply by works done in our own ſtrength, but by works acted and done by the ſtrength and aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God.——There is the *Popiſh ſcheme*.

2. The *Baxterian ſcheme* is alſo oppoſite to this goſpel doctrine: they tell us, that God hath made a *new law* with mankind; and *obedience* to that *new law*, and to its commands, is our righteouſneſs: and this obedience gives us a title to heaven, and gives us a title to Chriſt's blood, and to pardon: and the *act* of *faith* is our righteouſneſs, not as it *accepts* of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, but as it is an *obedience* to that *new law*; the very *act* and *work* of faith is, according to them, the *righteouſneſs itſelf*: and this faith takes in all kind of works, namely, repentance, love, obedience, and ten or twelve duties of that ſort; and all theſe together are our righteouſneſs for juſtification. "Really, "as one ſays upon this very head, if the apoſtle Paul "were alive, he would excommunicate ſuch mini-"ſters."

2*dly*, As to *practical legaliſts*; this generation is full of theſe. I know not a more reigning ſin among profeſſors: a goſpel-ſtrain is almoſt loſt, and a goſpel-method is almoſt forgotten. If we would go back to our reformers, we would ſee a goſpel-ſpirit among them; but now the *goſpel-ſcheme* is come under reproach, as if it were a *new ſcheme*; and ſome preach againſt it, write againſt it, reaſon againſt it, as if it were Antinomianiſm, and a going off from the law; as the Papiſts accuſed the Proteſtants of old: why? what is the matter? A helliſh, unholy, legal ſpirit reigns in the world. Now, in proſecuting of this uſe, and that we may ſee how much ground there is to lament over, and bewail a legal temper that takes place;

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I would here, 1. Shew ſome evidences of a legal ſpirit in the *ungodly* and unconverted. 2. Some evidences of a legal temper in *believers* themſelves. 3. Shew the *cauſe* of this legal temper that is in the world. 4. Shew the *evil* and *danger* of it.

[1.] Some evidences of a *legal temper*, that is natural to the *ungodly*, who having no new nature, have no goſpel-ſpirit at all. This may be evidenced in theſe four degrees of ſelf, and legal pride.

1. While man is juſt in the dead ſleep of *natural ſecurity*, having no ſight, nor ſenſe of his ſin, no conviction of, nor contrition for ſin; even then, which is ſtrange, he may imagine many times, that he is perfect, that he never breaks all the commandments of God, but keeps the whole law: the young Phariſee in the goſpel is an eminent inſtance hereof; our Lord gives him an account of the commands of the law, and he had the inſolent boldneſs to ſay to Chriſt, *All theſe things have I kept from my youth up;* and Paul, before his converſion, was ſtuffed with the ſame legal pride; *I was touching the law blameleſs.* What means he by that? Why, it is as if he had ſaid, I was ſuch a ſtanch Phariſee, and religious zealot, that, as I never thought I broke any of the ten commandments, ſo I thought I had kept the whole law. Wonderful arrogance and ignorance, to imagine that a man in his fallen ſtate can have a perfection, and keep the whole law! And yet the elect of God, before their converſion, have found that they have been filled with ſuch pride and inſolent thoughts, as you ſee in Paul: yea, and many think little leſs; though they ſay they are ſinners, yet they ſee not ſin, and fancy they are conformable to the law: they have a good heart, they wrong no body, they are juſt in their dealings, none can ſay, black is their eye; and here is their righteouſneſs being alive to the law.

2. Degree is, when men come to be *convinced of ſin* and *rebellion*, and of their *loſt ſtate*, by reaſon of their having trampled the divine authority under foot, offended his Majeſty, violated his law, provoked his anger; then, as if Chriſt were the moſt needleſs and uſe-

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leſs thing in heaven or earth, they run to their repentance for an atonement, as Papiſts to their penances, and Pagans to their ſacrifices, to atone their offended deities; as if there were no Day's-man, no Mediator betwixt God and man, to make atonement: Chriſt the Propitiation is altogether ſlighted; they hope to make atonement, and pacify God, by repenting ſeriouſly, and lamenting bitterly; and ſo they fall to work, praying, faſting, mourning, confeſſing with an abſolute neglect of Chriſt; and, upon the back of all their legal fears, confeſſions and bitter lamentations, their awakened conſciences are pleaſed and pacified. The ſtorm that was raiſed there, is turned to a calm; a falſe peace takes place, not founded upon Chriſt, or his atoning blood, but upon their confeſſions, tears, prayers, whereby they think to diſgorge and vomit up all the ſins of their life, and to ſave themſelves from them, and from the wrath that follows them. To this purpoſe was that ſaying of Auguſtine (it looks like a harſh ſaying, but had a good meaning) namely, "That repentance damns more than "ſins do." When people are under any fearful apprehenſion of the wrath to come upon them for their ſins, they flee to their repentance, inſtead of fleeing to Chriſt, and that effectually deſtroys and ruins them.

3. Degree is, when a man not only repents, but *amends*: he not only takes up reſolutions of amendment of life, but actually ſtudies obedience, reforms his way; he is at pains to get his life changed, but not to get his ſtate changed: he is not taken up to get a new heart, but would have the old heart made a little better; he thinks a little mends will do the buſineſs; and what is all this, but, as one ſays, *like the gilding of a rotten poſt*; the poſt is rotten within, but it is finely gilded over without? It is but like the whitening of a ſepulchre, that however white it may be without, yet it is full of dead mens bones within: it is like the painting of a chimney without, that is all black and ſooty within: it is like the adorning a dead corps with ſweet flowers.——The man is dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, notwithſtanding all this.

4. Degree is beyond all this, *goſpel-light* hath ſhined *objectively*

objectively upon them, and they are more illuminated than to be pleased with this; why? they hear of Christ, and that there is no salvation, no justification, without him; and therefore, they act faith upon him in a legal way; they believe in him, not by a saving faith, but a temporary faith. As believers do perform gospel-obedience to the law, so unbelievers may have a legal faith of the gospel, a legal faith upon Christ; believing in their own strength; believing before ever he sees his inability to believe; before ever he see his unwillingness to believe, before he be humbled under a sense of his absolute need of Christ; and before he sees what right and warrant he hath from the word. However, he fancies he hath closed with Christ, laid hold on his covenant; and this is the most subtle part of self-righteousness; yet, after all, he is the old man, still wedded to the law: and hence he hath no sanctification, no new nature, no new principle of spiritual life, no living unto God.

[2.] Some evidences of a *legal temper* that remains in *believers* themselves.

1. When their *comfort* is always up and down with their *frame*: if their frame be up, their comfort is up; if their frame be down, their comfort is down; if their frame be gone, their comfort is gone, their joy is withered: herein the legal spirit discovers itself. Whereas a gospel temper of soul would lead the man to rejoice, even when the changeable frame is gone, that the unchangeable covenant still remains: and to say, *Though the fig-tree should not blossom,—yet will I rejoice in the Lord.* Though grace be at a low ebb with me, yet the ocean of grace is in Christ; and herein I rejoice: tho' I be in darkness, yet I will rejoice that there is light in him; tho' I find nothing but deadness in me, yet will I rejoice that there is life in him; tho' I be empty, yet will I rejoice that there is fulness in him, and this is to be communicate in his time and way.

2. It is a *legal temper* in the believer, when his *assurance* is lost by his *challenges*. It may be, the man attained some sweet measure of assurance, but behold sin prevails, conscience challenges him, and hereupon he

razes all; this is an evidence of a legal temper, contrary to that goſpel ſpirit which we may ſee acting in David, Pſal. lxv. 3. *Iniquity prevails againſt me;* it is againſt my heart, againſt my will, againſt my prayers, againſt my ſecret groans and wreſtlings, againſt my reſolutions, againſt my inclination they prevail: Shall I raze the foundation of my faith upon this account? No: I flee to the blood of the Lamb of God, for cleanſing and purging both from the guilt and power of ſin; and therefore I will maintain my aſſurance and confidence in thee; *As for our tranſgreſſions, thou wilt purge them away.*

3. It is a *legal temper*, when *faith is marred*, either by *ſins* or *graces*; I mean, either by the prevalence of ſin, or the pride of grace. On the one hand, when the exerciſe of faith is marred by the prevalence of ſin; when their known ſenſe and feeling of out-breakings, either make a man ſtand a-back from Chriſt, or make him run away from him, by ſinking diſcouragement or ſecret deſpair: this evidences much legality. Are you convinced of ſin? Well then, you have the more need to come to Chriſt, and believe in him, and the leſs need to ſtay away from him. Peter had a prayer once, that looked like a ſet form of the devil's compoſing, *Lord, depart from me; for I am a ſinful man.* If it had run in a goſpel form, he would rather ſaid, *Lord, come to me; for I am a ſinful man.* Yet many believers have learned Peter's form of prayer; Lord, I am ſuch a ſinful man, I dare not come to thee, nor believe that thou wilt come to me: Why? the more ſinful thou art, the more need thou haſt to come to him, and to employ him to come to you, and ſave you.——On the other hand, when the *exerciſe of faith* is marred by the pride of grace, this is a part of a legal temper: when believers truſt more to their graces than to Chriſt, the fountain of all grace; when they look more to the ſtrength of gracious habits, and truſt more to them, than to the grace that is in Chriſt, in which they are called to be ſtrong; *Be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt:* As by poring of their ſins, they are many times led off from depending on Chriſt, from

conſtant incomes of actual influences. And hence, when a believer is lively, he is ready to think, he will never be dead again; when he is ſpiritual, that he will never be carnal again; when he is up in the mount, that he will never be down in the valley again, ſaying, *By thy favour my mountain ſtands ſtrong;* he thinks it like mount Zion, that can never be ſhaken, and that he will never doubt again; but behold, *Thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled:* my good frame was changed to a bad one; of a ſudden my mount Zion was turned to a mount Sinai; all fears, all frowns, all darkneſs. Never hath a believer more need to act faith, and cloſe dependence on the Lord, than when his graces and frames are moſt lively, leſt ſelf-confidence creep in, and he confides more in created grace, than in the fountain; out of whoſe fulneſs he is to have *grace for grace.* Let your frame be never ſo good, your faith never ſo ſtrong, your grace never ſo lively, at any time, yet look up ſtill for new influences; for without momentary ſupplies and breathings from heaven, your gracious habits cannot act, and will not hold out a moment.

4. It is a *legal temper*, when *peace* is always marred by ſhort-comings; ſhort-comings in the exerciſe of grace, ſhort-comings in the mortification of ſin, ſhort-comings in holineſs; when they pore upon theſe ſhort-comings; upon the weakneſs of grace on the one hand, and the ſtrength of corruption on the other; upon ſuch a ſin and luſt that prevails, upon ſuch a plague and diſtemper that affects them; inſomuch that they cannot let in a word of comfort, they cannot hearken to the *joyful ſound of the goſpel;* like Iſrael, who hearkened not to Moſes, becauſe of the *anguiſh of the ſpirit:* they look inward to themſelves, and finding nothing there but failings, and infirmities, and plagues, inſtead of holineſs, their peace is wholly demoliſhed; becauſe they do not, at the ſame time, look upward to Chriſt, to his blood and righteouſneſs, and to his fulneſs: here is a legal temper.——So alſo, to the ſame purpoſe, when a man's peace and comfort reſts only and always upon his ſanctification, as if there were

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no other ground of joy, but a righteouſneſs inherent: ſurely, when the joy of ſanctification is greater than the joy of juſtification, it is an evidence of a legal temper; for the joy of juſtification is founded upon a law-biding righteouſneſs, the perfect obedience of the glorious Head, which is always the ſame unchangeable ground of joy to believers; whereas his ſanctification is imperfect here, and cannot afford ſuch peace and joy, as faith in a perfect obedience will give. The true circumciſion rejoice in Chriſt, and in what they have in him, more than in what they have from him. But behold, even the believer is ready to be taken up with his ſanctification, which is inherent, and ſo to be lifted up, when he attains to a good gale, a great meaſure of ſanctification; corruption may abuſe the privilege, and then he is proud and lifted up. It is true, communion with God is of a humbling nature, and natively makes a man humble, and lively, and watchful; but when the good frame is wearing off, and corruption beginning to work again, if this nick of time be not noticed, and the believer on his guard, a proud thought may enter in, were it even upon a Paul wrapt up to the third heavens; *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure, a meſſenger of Satan was ſent; a thorn in the fleſh.* O how does a legal temper run through every frame! When a man is dead and dull, then he is in danger of murmuring; and when he is active and lively, then he is in danger of ſwelling.

5. It is a *legal temper*, when a man's *expectation of ſucceſs* is built upon the *miniſter that preaches*: if the miniſter hath a weak gift, O they will not hear that man, at leaſt they expect little good of him: if another hath great gifts, and a taking way, O now they expect heaven will come down; way? this is an evidence of a *legal temper*: for a goſpel temper will expect nothing, but in a goſpel why; even by the powerful influences of the Spirit promiſed in the goſpel. The goſpel in any man's mouth is but a dead letter, without the Holy Ghoſt.

6. It is a *legal temper*, when the believer is under *exceſſive diſcouragements*, on whatever ground: it is an

evidence he is too much under the law; for the law can give no encouragement, no ſettlement to the conſcience; it is only Chriſt can give reſt; *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* What is it that diſcourages a believer, when he is under this legal temper? Sometimes he is diſcouraged when he performs duty, and cannot find that preſence, that ſenſible help he would have: why then he is quite diſpirited.——Indeed he hath ground of mourning, when the Lord is away; he ſhould be deeply humbled, for the cauſes of it: but when he is ſo diſpirited, that he loſes his confidence, and is beaten quite away from his faith and hope, queſtions his ſtate, and gives way to ſlaviſh fear, that weakens his hands in duties, and draws his heart from duty, it is a token he is ſecretly hankering after the law; for the language of the heart of him is, O if I could pray with as much life, and hear with as much attention, and perform duty with as much vigour as I would be at! O then I would have a good hope; and ſo it is not Chriſt, ſo much as the law, the old huſband, that you deſire to place your hope upon, while you are under that legal frame: the apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome believers that *deſire to be under the law*, Gal. iv. 21. Sometimes their diſcouragements ariſe from this, that they dare not apply the promiſes; and why ſo? becauſe they think they are not for the like of them; ſuch a promiſe belongs to ſuch and ſuch a good perſon; it is for a holy man, but not for the like of me: what is this but a legal temper, apprehending, that if you had ſuch and ſuch a legal righteouſneſs, then God would be ſome way indebted to give you the promiſe! But, O is not grace to be glorified in this new and goſpel way! And therefore, the more of a goſpel ſpirit you have, the more chearfully will you embrace the promiſe, for this end, that *having theſe promiſes, you may cleanſe yourſelf*, by ſucking virtue from the breaſts of the promiſe.

7. It is an evidence of a *legal temper*, when they are *always ſtraitened in duty*. Sometimes they are diſcouraged,

couraged, becauſe they are ſo ſtraitened in duty; and they are ſtraitened in duty, becauſe they are ſo legal in it. Their diſcouragement flows from their ſtraitening, and their ſtraitening flows from their legal ſpirit; for a goſpel ſpirit is a ſpirit of liberty. 1. When a believer is for ordinary ſtraitened without life, without liberty, it is an evidence of a legal ſpirit; for, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty: The law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus makes* the man *free from the law of ſin and death*, Rom. viii. 2. When one is influenced by the covenant of grace, he runs in the way of God's commandments. Though you have once known what it was to run ſweetly in the Lord's way, yet if now you find a habitual indiſpoſition to duties and religious exerciſes to be a heavy yoke, a grievous burden, this indiſpoſition teſtifies againſt you, that though you have once known the goſpel of Chriſt, yet now you are hankering after the law. The Lord may indeed withdraw his preſence from his people, for neceſſary ends, even from the man that hath much of the goſpel-ſpirit; and ſuch a man, amidſt all his trials of that ſort, will triumph in Chriſt, and ſay, tho' I have little in hand, yet I have much in hope; whatever my own wants be, I have enough in Chriſt; however weak in myſelf, I am ſtrong in him; imperfect in myſelf, but complete in him. But when, for ordinary, the perſon does not find pleaſure in duty, hath little heart to it, and finds it not eaſy and light, but grievous; it is a token, that he is bearing the yoke of the law, or old covenant: For *Chriſt's yoke is eaſy and his burden is light;* but this law-yoke is heavy. The law, the firſt huſband, requires hard, and heavy things, and does not help the ſinner with ſtrength; but Chriſt, the new huſband, requires the ſame things, but he gives ſtrength to perform; and what he requires of us, he works in us; *I can do all things thro' Chriſt ſtrengthening me;* were it to over-leap a wall, and fight armies of devils in my way.

8. It is a ſign of a *legal temper*, when a poor creature finds always diſcouragement, except when about religious duties; and finds no peace, when about any other

other work; but is ſtill racked, except when upon his knees, or going about ſome religious performance or other: it is a token of being knit and wedded too much to the firſt huſband; for the law drives hard, and craves hard: but Chriſt is very tender and gentle in his commands and demands; and a perſon, under the influences of grace, will find as much ſweetneſs, even when eating and drinking, and when he is about his lawful employment ſometimes, as when about religious exerciſes. Miſtake me not here; think not that Chriſt will indulge his people in the omiſſion of duty, that is not what I intend, God forbid; I know and am perſuaded, that the ſweeteſt hours that the believer hath, is when he enjoys communion with God in the ordinances and duties of his appointment: but yet, they that have much of a goſpel-ſpirit can, with peace, and freedom of mind, go about other things as the work of Chriſt; though it be a piece of ſelf-denial to them, not to be always with him, they would notwithſtanding incline to be every minute with him, and are longing for uninterrupted communion and fellowſhip with him: yet the thing I ſay is, that their hearts are not diſheartened, nor their ſpirit diſpirited, when called to other things; and it ſavours much of a legal ſpirit, when the poor exerciſed creature can find no peace about their other lawful duties, unleſs they be ſtill about duties that are properly religious duties, ſuch as prayer, and reading, and hearing, and the like; for, in ſome ſenſe, other duties, ſuch as plowing and ſowing, and the like, may be turned to religious duties, by a ſpiritual-minded man, and ſuch as have a goſpel-ſpirit, while they carry a heavenly mind to their earthly work.

9. It is a ſign of too much of a *legal temper*, when a man is not *ſatisfied* with the *meaſure of grace* that the Lord allows him, but frets againſt heaven becauſe he hath not ſo much as others. Let none miſtake me here either: no man ought, in any different way, to be content with any meaſure of grace; we are ſtill to be going on to perfection; but when we grudge and repine, and are pained at the heart, and murmur againſt God, becauſe

becauſe we have not this and that meaſure as others have, it is a ſymptom of hankering after the law. A goſpel ſpirit does not ſtrive with God, but meekly waits upon the Sovereign, who *will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy*, and diſpenſes freely of his gifts and graces as he pleaſeth.

10. It is a ſign of a *legal temper*, when a perſon is more taken up with the *gifts* of Chriſt, than with *Chriſt himſelf*; more taken up with any little thing they get from him, than with himſelf. When they get any ſenſible grace, any ſenſible good affections, melting of heart, melting of ſpirit; any inclination to what is good; any gifts, or graces, whether more common or ſpecial, they admire theſe, and are not ſo much taken up with Chriſt himſelf. But the perſon that is evangelical in his actings, by what he gets he is led to the giver; if this be ſweet, O he is infinitely ſweeter that ſent it: I embrace the token, and it draws out my heart the more after him, from whom it came.

11. It is a ſign of being too much under the influence of the law, when the believer is poſſeſſed with a *fretful ſpirit*, and is not content with any thing; for the goſpel ſweetens a man's frame of ſpirit. If the believer go to the law, he is conſtantly pained and wounded; and a diſeaſed perſon is always a repining perſon; and this fretfulneſs is a ſign, that they are not ſound at the bottom; but the goſpel is health to the heart, and medicine to all the fleſh. A goſpel ſpirit is a ſpirit of *faith*, a ſpirit of *love*, a ſpirit of *power*, and of a *ſound mind*, 2 Tim. i. 7. And hence, take a believer, when he is much under the influence of the grace of the goſpel, ten thouſand little difficulties, that ſometimes fret him and put him out of humour, will not move him then, when he is living near Chriſt, and under the influence of the covenant of grace; but when at other times every thing frets him, it is a ſign that the law hath the aſcendent, for *the law works wrath*, Rom. iv. 15.

12. It is a ſign of a *legal ſpirit*, when, upon the back of religious duties, the man hath *more freedom to ſin; Sin ſhall not have dominion over you: for you are not under*

der

der the law, but under grace. The laws irritates corruption, raiſes the devil, but cannot lay him; but the grace of God in Chriſt, *teaches to deny ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts.* This grace only keeps down the devil, and lays him low, as it were; yea, *bruiſes the ſerpent's head*, and *deſtroys the works of the devil.* When a man performs duty in a legal way, to quiet his conſcience; why, then, when conſcience is quieted with the duty, luſt gets a vent like the whore, of which we read, Prov. vii. 14. *I have offered my peace-offerings, this day I have paid my vows: come, let us take our fill of love.* But when a man performs duty in a goſpel way, not merely to ſatisfy conſcience, or pacify the judge, but to glorify God, to honour Chriſt, which is the great goſpel end of performing duty; then this glory of God and Chriſt, that he hath in view, prompts him to deſire, by the means of duty, to get the better of God's enemies in the heart; and when he gets the victory, he deſires to purſue his enemies, even to the death.

Now, my dear friends, if there be any believer here, I am ſure ſome of theſe evidences, if not all, may find you out, to have too much of a *legal temper* about you. O believers, you who *have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope, ſet before you*, will you conſider what danger you are in from Chriſt's *rival*, the *law* as a covenant, your firſt huſband, and how much your following after that doth undo you? You, it may be, think, you are in hazard from carnal friends, or from the world; but you cannot underſtand how you can be in hazard from the law: but you may be in the greateſt hazard from that which you are leaſt afraid of. Paul tells the believers here, and elſewhere, to whom he writes, what hazard they were in, even from theſe that pretend to preach the goſpel, who were but miniſters of the old covenant, who preſſed, and knew nothing but to preſs the people to yield obedience and ſubjection to their old huſband, the law; pretending to the greateſt holineſs and ſtrictneſs of life: and preſſing nothing but Do, do, and live. Nay, but ſays Paul, I, and all believers, have another way of living to God, and his glory, than by living on, or by the law as a covenant; *I through the*

law

law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. O believer, arm yourſelf againſt all proxies that the law makes uſe of; ſtudy the nature, fulneſs, and freedom of the new covenant; and pray much for the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt, and his goſpel. I go on to

[3.] The *third* thing here propoſed, which was to ſhew the *cauſes* of this legal temper. Why is the world ſo ſet upon the law, as a *covenant*, and ſo little upon Chriſt, as the *Lord their righteouſneſs?* I ſum up all the reaſons into this one, which I ſhall draw out into ſome particulars: and it is *groſs ignorance, proud ignorance; For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God*, Rom. x. 3. The world is ignorant of God, ignorant of the law, ignorant of the goſpel, ignorant of Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs.

1. Ignorance of *God* is one cauſe of this legal temper. People are ignorant of the perfections of God; more particularly, they are ignorant of the holineſs of God: if men ſaw what an infinite holy God he is, and what an infinite hatred he bears towards the leaſt ſin, or violation of his law; if they knew that a proud thought were enough to damn a million of angels, and that a wandering thought is enough to damn a million of worlds, would they entertain a fancy of being juſtified and accepted upon the ground of any legal righteouſneſs of their own, whether natural or gracious? Nay, they would not imagine to be thus accepted, if they did not think that God is ſuch an one as themſelves.——They are ignorant alſo of the juſtice of God, and the righteouſneſs of that judge, who will by *no means clear the guilty;* and if it were not ſo, that they were ignorant of his juſtice, would any guilty ſinner hope to be cleared, and acquitted any other way, than upon the account of a ranſom of infinite value?—They are ignorant of the wiſdom of God, in the glorious plan of redemption, and contrivance of ſalvation by the righteouſneſs of another, even of the God-man Chriſt Jeſus.——Ignorance of theſe, and the like attri-

butes and perfections of God, is the great cauſe of their being joined to the law, and alive to it.

2. Ignorance of the *law* is another cauſe of this legal temper and diſpoſition: and here,

(1.) They are ignorant of the *precept* of the law in the extent, ſpirituality, holineſs, and perfection thereof: the young man in the goſpel thought himſelf perfect; why? he did not know the law. Paul thought himſelf blameleſs, while he was alive to the law; men think it a narrow rule, condemning only ſome groſs enormities of life, and commanding only ſome outward materials of obedience; but they ſee not the *commandment to be exceeding broad;* hence they imagine, they can obſerve it perfectly well.

(2.) They are ignorant of the *penalty* of the law, the ſanction of it: they do not believe, that there is a curſe intailed upon every diſobedience; *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* Hence, they are fooliſhly fond of their own legal righteouſneſs, not knowing the ſeverity of the legal ſanction.

(3.) They are ignorant of the *end* of the law, even of God's end and deſign in giving it. God gave the law to Iſrael with fire and thunder: For what end? even to be a *ſchool-maſter to lead them to Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 24. *For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4. But behold ſo ignorant was Iſrael of the end of the law, that, like the legal ſpirit in our own day, they thought it was given for this end, that they might obey it as a condition of life, as it bore the image and repreſentation of a covenant of works; ſo they turned it directly to a covenant of works, ſaying, *All that the Lord hath commanded, we will do*, Exod. xix. 8. If it had been poſſible, or practicable, for them to have performed what they ignorantly promiſed, there would have been no need of Chriſt, or his righteouſneſs either: *We will* DO, ſay they; there is *obedience;* yea, we will do ALL that the LORD JEHOVAH *hath commanded us*, there is *exactly* and *perpetually perfect obedience:* yea, WE *will*

do

do all; WE ourſelves; there is *perfect perſonal obedience* reſolved upon: as if they had in their poſſeſſion, all the power and holineſs that Adam had in innocence.——What ſays Joſhua to them, upon ſuch a proud, ignorant, and arrogant reſolution as this? Indeed, he tells them, it was ſimply impoſſible for them; *Ye cannot ſerve the Lord, for he is a holy God*, Joſhua xxiv. 19. He is a holy God, and you are a ſinful people; it is impoſſible for you to do what you ſay. The law was given them, to let them ſee their utter inſufficiency and inability; to let them ſee their ſins, and deſert becauſe of ſin; that, under the fear of divine wrath, they might be obliged to have recourſe to the Saviour. But they being ignorant of this great end of the law, ſet up an obedience of their own.

3. Ignorance of the *goſpel*, is another cauſe of this legal temper; and here ignorance diſcovers itſelf in manifold inſtances.

(1.) They are ignorant of the *promiſe* of the goſpel; ſuch as that, Iſa. xlv. 24. *Surely ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.* Here is a ſum of the goſpel promiſe; a promiſe of Chriſt, and of faith in him: *Surely ſhall one ſay;* here is a promiſe of faith, and faith working out from the heart to the mouth; for, *With the heart men believe unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation.* ONE *ſhall ſay;* What! no more but ONE? what a pity is it, that only *one* ſhould ſay ſo? Indeed it intimates, that very few will be brought off from their legal temper: ONE *ſhall ſay*, not every one; well, but what will he ſay? *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength:* Righteouſneſs, for juſtification; ſtrength for ſanctification: righteouſneſs, to make me happy; ſtrength, to make me holy: righteouſneſs, to give me a title to heaven; ſtrength, to give me a meetneſs for heaven. *I* have all this, ſhall one ſay, by the appropriating act of faith; applying all to himſelf in particular, with aſſured confidence, according to the meaſure of faith: *I* have *righteouſneſs and ſtrength:* where hath he it? It is *in the* LORD I have it: I have it not in myſelf, nor in my own natural power; I have it not in my

own free-will; I have it not in my walk and converſation; I have it not in my zeal or profeſſion; I have it not in my religious duties or performances; I have it not in my heart or life; nay, certainly I have it not there; but, *Surely in the* LORD *have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength;* in the LORD *only:* men are ignorant of this.

(2.) They are ignorant of the *method* of the goſpel, in the application of grace promiſed, particularly in the command of believing, which belongs to the diſpenſation of the goſpel; wherein the law, in its commands and threatenings both, is uſed in a ſubſerviency, to advance the ends of the goſpel. Though the law doth not teach us to believe in Chriſt, yet he being revealed, it obliges us to believe in him: though the law reveals not a Saviour, yet the goſpel revealing him, the law obliges us to come to him.——But now this method of the goſpel, and diſpenſation thereof, is not known in the world; hence come legal undertakings of it; men confounding the *command of believing*, with the *goſpel to be believed;* the *duty* of *faith*, with the *object* of *faith;* and ſo turn the goſpel to a new law, a new covenant of works; as if the act of believing were our righteouſneſs for acceptance with God. Neither can they conceive the command of believing to be the *great command*, though God himſelf hath ſaid, *This is his commandment, that ye believe in the name of his Son:* Nay, legaliſts cannot underſtand that; they think it is God's great command, that ſeeing they have ſinned by breaking the law, they ſhould repent by turning to it; ſeeing they have diſpleaſed God by their ſins, they ſhould pleaſe him by their repentance; ſeeing they have provoked him by their diſobedience, they ſhould pacify him with their obedience; ſeeing they have drawn down the curſe by their tranſgreſſions, they ſhould remove it by their reformation: They do not know that the great command is, *to believe on the Son of God.*

(3.) They are ignorant of the great *end* of the goſpel, which is, to humble and abaſe the creature to the loweſt, and to raiſe and exalt grace to the higheſt; that

that *No fleſh ſhould glory in God's preſence*, but that *he that glorieth, ſhould glory in the Lord: In the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory.* That is the great end and deſign of the goſpel: but the baſe legal ſpirit is ignorant of that deſign.

(4.) They are ignorant of the *goſpel-covenant:* the doctrinal and practical confounding of the two covenants of works and grace, is the great reaſon of this legal temper. And here people diſcover ignorance of the condition of the covenant; they are ignorant of the condition of the covenant of grace and works: the *condition* of the covenant of *works*, was *perſonal* obedience; the MAN *himſelf that does theſe things ſhall live in them:* and *perfect* obedience was required; a perfection of parts, a perfection of degrees, a perfection of duration. The *condition* of the covenant of *grace*, is *Chriſt's perfect obedience received by faith.* There is much ignorance of this, at the root of all the legality that takes place in the world. They are ignorant of the *form* of the covenant; how by the covenant of works we get ſtrength within ourſelves, and by ourſelves we could obey it; how by the covenant of grace our ſtrength is without us, as well as our righteouſneſs; *In the Lord have I ſtrength;* and, *we are to be ſtrong in the Lord*, not in *ourſelves*, but in the *Lord;* and, *in the power of his might;* to be ſtrong in *grace*, not that grace that is in ourſelves; but the grace that is in CHRIST JESUS.

4. Ignorance of *Chriſt* and his *righteouſneſs*, is a great cauſe of men's eſtabliſhing a legal righteouſneſs; *For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God*, Rom. x. 3.—— God was about to caſt off a whole church, to reject them, and unchurch them: Why? What is the reaſon? becauſe they were ſuch a proud pack, they would rather be damned with their own righteouſneſs, than ſaved by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, or obliged and beholden to him for it. They would not *ſubmit* to it; Why? becauſe they are *ignorant* of it; they do not ſee the glory of it, as it is the righteouſneſs of God; they

they do not ſee the neceſſity of it, becauſe their own righteouſneſs was reckoned ſufficient; they do not ſee the fulneſs of it, as anſwering all the demands and commands of the law; they do not ſee the value of it, as ſufficient to procure the favour of God, and purchaſe grace and glory; they do not ſee the acceptableneſs of it, as being the only righteouſneſs with which God is well-pleaſed, and that thereby the law is magnified, and made honourable: they are ignorant of all this, and therefore they go about to *eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own*, and *will not ſubmit* to this. Their ignorance was a proud ignorance; and ſo it is with all by nature: we are filled with proud ignorance, and ignorant pride; though our power be gone, our pride remains.

[4.] The *fourth* thing here propoſed, was, the *evil* and *danger* of a legal temper, and legal obedience: Why?

1. This legal way is very *unpleaſant* work, it is a wearifome work; *What a wearineſs is it?* ſays the man. *He is wearied in the greatneſs of his way, and yet ſays he not, there is no hope*, Iſaiah lvii. 10.——It is true, the law hath ſometimes its influences of comfort to its votaries; and ſtony-ground hearers may *receive the word with joy;* and no doubt they may pray, and do other duties alſo with joy; but it is only a mood that ſoon evaniſhes, having no root in Chriſt. Can a dead man have pleaſure in vital actions? can a heavy ſtone incline upwards? O but the legal ſoul is a miſerable creature! The law drags him to duties, conſcience preſſes him to work; ſaying, Faſt, pray; pray, man; work for your life; repent, reform, as you would not be damned: But behold, he cannot, though they be good duties he is called to; and the legal covenant, the legal miniſter, the legal conſcience of him cries, Make brick, make brick, make brick; but behold, he hath no ſtraw, no ſtraw, no ſtraw; nothing to make it of. He hath no ſtrength, no grace, no communication; and ſo he tugs, he works, he ſweats; but it is a heartleſs and unpleaſant work.

2. Legal

2. Legal obedience is very unprofitable work, as well as unpleaſant; *I will declare thy righteouſneſs and thy work; for they ſhall not profit thee*, Iſaiah lvii. 12. The ſelf-righteous Phariſee may faſt twice a-week, give alms of all that he hath; he may make long prayers, many prayers; he may both preach and pray frequently and fervently; yea, the poor legaliſt may work at his ſecret devotion and family devotion; he may wait on ordinances, and frequent communions, and run the whole round of duties; and when he hath done this thirty, forty, fifty years, all the profit is, he gets hell for his pains; *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices?* Iſaiah i. 2. All is unprofitable.

3. The legal obedience is very *carnal*, for it is a life wholly deſtitute of the Spirit; *This would I learn of you*, ſays Paul; if you would be doctors of the law, let me have a leſſon from you, if you can give it; *Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Gal. iii. 2. Was it by the works of the law? I ſuppoſe not; nay, the Spirit is not received in that way: it is in and by the goſpel of Chriſt. The legaliſt is deſtitute of the Spirit; whatever affectitious holineſs he may have, or real holineſs he may pretend to, he wants a ſanctifying work, ſealing work; *Senſual, not having the Spirit.*

4. Legal obedience *croſſes the moſt glorious deſign of heaven*, particularly God's deſign in giving Chriſt, and Chriſt's deſign in coming to the world.

(1.) It croſſes *God's great deſign*; What it that? It is even the exalting of his free grace; What is the great deſign of all the great works of God, *viz.* election, redemption, regeneration, providence?——Why does he chooſe one, and reject others? Why does he chooſe a wicked Publican, and caſt a righteous Phariſee to hell? Why does he redeem a poor ignorant, ill-natured man or woman from their miſerable ſtate, and let the rich and learned go to hell? Why does he regenerate an elect ſoul, after he hath been twenty, thirty years in the devil's ſervice? and after they are regenerate, why does he in providence let them fall into ſtraits, wants, ſins, manifold temptations, troubles, affliction,

fliction, desertion, and heavy complaints on these accounts? Why? All is to exalt free grace in the issue. But now the legalist crosses this design of God; he would have self exalted, his works exalted, instead of Christ, and free grace. He puts another righteousness in the room of the righteousness of Christ, and so takes the *dung* of his own righteousness, as Paul calls it, and casts it upon the face of free, rich, and sovereign grace, to cover, and hide, and darken it.—— O what a deviliſh design is this, in opposition to God's glorious design of making grace shine brightly!

(2.) It crosses *Christ's great design in coming to the world:* The grand intention of the Son of God, in coming from heaven, was, *To bring in an everlasting righteousness*, Dan. ix. 24. But behold, the legalist's design, in establishing his own righteousness, is, to make all Christ's labour to be lost labour; he endeavours to frustrate the very end of Christ's death, and makes it vain; *If righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain*, Gal. ii. 21. Instead of Christ's everlasting righteousness, he sets up a righteousness that cannot last half a day, nor half an hour; nay, not a moment.

5. Legal obedience hath the evil of *blasphemy* in it. It reproaches the righteousness of Christ, as if it were not sufficient, as if his atonement were not perfect, as if his satisfaction were not full, as if his obedience were not perfect, unless it be patched up with the rags of the man's own righteousness. Is not Christ's righteousness perfect without their addition? O do not blaspheme the Son of God, and say in effect, his obedience was not a divine, perfect obedience; for thus you reproach his fulness and sufficiency.

6. Legal obedience issues in a *terrible disappointment*; the poor deluded man thinks, his prayers and duties, that he hath been performing for so many years, will make an excellent robe to cover him: I hope, says the man, I have something that will contribute to make me die in peace; I have something to make me stand in judgment, that others have not; for many a duty have I performed, many a prayer have I made, these twenty or thirty years; and many times have I prayed with very

very much warmneſs of affection, and livelineſs of frame, and therefore I have a good hope, that God will be pleaſed, and all will be well with me. But, O what a fearful diſappointment does the man meet with! Death comes; and if he die in the ſame legal dream, he goes down to the grave with a lie in his right-hand; *The hypocrite's hope is like the ſpider's web;* Why? What comes of it? The ſpider works it out of his own bowels: it is her houſe, it is her food, it is her fence; there ſhe dwells, there ſhe feeds, there ſhe ſecures and ſhelters herſelf for a while; but at the cloſe of the day, or the end of the week, the beſom comes along, and ſweeps her and her lodging, and all to the ground: Even ſo, the legaliſt, he works a web out of his own bowels, he wraps himſelf in this garment of his own ſpinning; here he dwells, here he works, here he feeds, here he ſhelters himſelf from all challenges, and apprehenſions of danger: but behold, the beſom of death and deſtruction comes, and ſweeps him, and his refuge of lies down to the bottomleſs pit. If his eyes be open on a death-bed to ſee hell, to ſee the juſtice of God, to ſee the ſpirituality of the law, the imperfection of his duties, the emptineſs of his performances, and the ſandy foundation he hath been building his faith upon, then his conſcience roars, his heart deſpairs; he hath no peace, no comfort; but finds himſelf miſerably diſappointed. If his eyes be not open; what then? why, he dies in a deluſion, as he lived, ſinks into the lake of fire; and in hell he opens his eyes, and finds himſelf eternally diſappointed.——O ſee then, what ground there is to lament over this legal temper, which is indeed a damnable temper, where it hath a full reign.

Uſe *fourth* viz. Of *exhortation*, both to them that are *alive to the law*, and to them that are *dead to the law*, of whom the text eſpecially ſpeaks.

1*ſt*, To *unbelievers*, and all theſe that are *alive to the law*. O! for the Lord's ſake, take no reſt till you get out of that damnable ſtate! O conſider what you are doing, ſo long as you are not dead to the law: the beſt thing that you are doing, in that caſe, is, that you are

building your reſidence about the old rotten walls of the covenant of works. Perhaps you think you are a good proteſtant, you are a good Chriſtian, you have a good heart, you perform good duties, you partake of good ordinances, and what evil ſhould you fear?

1. I aſſure you, that you are under the *curſe* of the law of works; *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.* And while you are under the law, and ſeeking to eſtabliſh a law-righteouſneſs of your own, all the people of God are obliged to ſay, that God is in the right to curſe you; they are obliged to ſay *Amen*, to all the curſes of the Bible againſt you; *Curſed is he that confirmeth not all the words of this law; and all the people ſhall ſay*, AMEN, Deut. xxvii. 26. If you will take the old covenant of doing for life, and juſtification, then you muſt take it with a vengeance, unleſs you do perfectly, and do to purpoſe, which is impoſſible for you; *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them:* And all believers can ſay AMEN to it, in the words of Paul; *Let him that loves not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, be* ANATHEMA MARANATHA, [*i. e. accurſed until the Lord come.*] 1 Cor. xvi. 22. While you are under the law, no bleſſing belongs to you, but all divine curſes; if you will not get out of your legal righteouſneſs, and get under the goſpel covert of the blood of Jeſus, nothing but terror belongs to you; and nothing but terrors and curſes can I preach to you: for, *As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe.*

2. I muſt tell you, as you are under the curſe of the law, ſo you are under the *command* of the law; *Do, and Live.* Though by the goſpel-call, you are not obliged indeed to ſeek righteouſneſs in yourſelf, in order to life, but to ſeek it in Chriſt; yet by your unbelief, you keep yourſelf under the command of the law, ; *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandment;* keep it perfectly, or elſe vengeance ſhall overtake you. It is not your little endeavours that will ſatisfy the law; though you ſhould read, faſt, mourn, and ſhed tears of blood all your days, it will not avail, or be to any purpoſe, in

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ſatisfying the law's demands: if you will pay any duty to the law, as a covenant, *you are a debtor to fulfil the* WHOLE *law*, Gal. v. 3. The law, is a chain that is linked together, and if you take one link of it, the weight of the whole chain will be upon you; and ſo, if you will do any thing in obedience to the law, that you may be thereby ſaved and juſtified, you are under bondage to the whole law; and bound to do every thing perfectly, that you may be juſtified. O the miſerable bondage that you are under! You will never be able to ſatisfy the law; and ſo you are *condemned already*; yea, let me tell you more, you are a wicked ungodly creature: whatever you ſeem to be to others, or think you are yourſelf; yet, being alive to the law, you are a ſtranger to the life of God; for, till you be dead to the law, you ſhall never live unto God: though you look like an angel of light for holineſs, yet, being alive to the law, you have no true holineſs nor godlineſs. Ye that are ſtill leaning to your works, then you will meet with a ſad diſappointment; for, *By the deeds of the law no fleſh living can be juſtified.*——But there are others, who ſeem to be upon another extreme; they ſay, the law is now abrogated, and we are not to ſeek juſtification or ſalvation that way; and therefore we are careleſs about the law, or about any duty of obedience.——Yea, but let me tell you your doom out of the law alſo; you are a deſperate ſinner: becauſe you cannot ſatisfy the curſe of the law, therefore you run away from the commands of the law, and run away to the devil, inſtead of running to Chriſt. —But I will tell you, though the law cannot juſtify, or ſave you, yet it can condemn you: it hath power to condemn you, though it hath none to ſave you; and it will condemn, and does condemn you, and all that are out of Chriſt; and therefore, for every ſin that you are guilty of, you muſt anſwer; and every ſin is enough to damn you, by virtue of the law. O then, may this be a mean to move you all that are under the law, to ſeek in to Chriſt, *Who is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth!* Come,

poor, curſed, condemned, ungodly ſinner, if you would live unto God here, and live with him hereafter, come out from under the heavy yoke of the law; Chriſt hath a good and perfect law-biding righteouſneſs to give you, though you have nothing to bring to him, but ſin, and guilt, and miſery, and hell about you, yet come to him; and if you cannot come, O go to him, and tell him that you cannot come; and plead, that, by his omnipotent power, he may draw you; and if you do ſo in truth, it is one to a thouſand, if he does not meet you half way. O man, you cannot be ſaved, to the credit of God's holineſs, unleſs you join with Chriſt's righteouſneſs, which anſwers alſo the threatening of the law, and ſatisfies the juſtice of God. In this way, mercy can take vent, to the credit and honour of all God's perfections. O man, woman, are you for this way of it? O then ſay, Farewel to the law of works for ever: here is a more noble and glorious way. O bleſſed be God for ever, if that be the bargain betwixt Chriſt's righteouſneſs and your ſoul! O may the Lord draw you to it! But now,

2*dly*, To you that are *believers*, and have cloſed with Chriſt, and ſo are *dead to the law*: remember, you are not to live a lawleſs life for all that. My exhortation to you is, that, being *dead to the law*, you *live unto God*. Let me offer ſome *motives* and *directions*, and the rather that I have taken ſome pains to gather together, and lay before you many things relative to a *legal temper*, for guarding you againſt the Neonomian *extreme*, on the one hand; let men beware leſt their carnal hearts abuſe this doctrine of grace to Antinomian *licentiouſneſs*, on the other hand. Sure I am, the goſpel doctrine of itſelf hath no ſuch tendency: though an ignorant world may ſuſpect the doctrine of the goſpel, the doctrine of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, as if it were againſt a perſonal righteouſneſs or holineſs; I declare to you, in the name of JEHOVAH, that the contrary is true; and aſſure you, that you will never live according to the law, as a rule of holineſs, till you be dead to the law, as a covenant and condition of life. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

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If the light of the glorious goſpel, even the light of the *glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, did once *ſhine into your heart*, then, *beholding this glory of the Lord*, you would be *changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord;* yea, to believe the goſpel ſavingly, is the way to fulfil perfectly. The true believer may be ſaid to fulfil the law, both as it is a covenant, and as it is a rule: As it is a *covenant*, he fulfils it perfectly and regally in his Head and Surety, in whom he hath perfect, everlaſting righteouſneſs: And as it is a *rule*, he fulfils it perfectly alſo, with a perfection of parts here, and a perfection of degrees hereafter: and in both theſe reſpects may that word be explained, Rom. i. 3, 4. where the *righteouſneſs of the law* is ſaid to be *fulfilled in believers*, whoſe character is, that they *walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit*. Now, I would preſs you to this ſpiritual walk, this holy life, which is a living unto God; for, tho' your holineſs be not neceſſary *for your juſtification*, that is the damnable doctrine of Popery; though, I ſay, it be not neceſſary for your juſtification, becauſe you are dead to the law in point of juſtification; yet it is neceſſary, becauſe you are *dead to the law*, for this very end, that you may *live unto God* in point of *ſanctification*, and that you may be holy.

More particularly for *motives*, conſider the *neceſſity of holineſs*, in theſe following particulars.

1. It is neceſſary in reſpect of *God;* and here (to uſe the method of a great divine on this head) conſider how the will of God, the love of God, the glory of God, obliges you in particular, believer, to live unto God.

(1.) The ſovereign *will* of God obliges you to holineſs; *This is the will of God, even your ſanctification*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 3. It is the will of God the *Father*, he hath ordained it; *We are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God before had ordained that we ſhould walk therein.*——It is the will of God the *Son; I have ordained you that you ſhould bring forth fruit, and that it ſhould remain*, John xv. 16.——

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It is the will of God the *Holy Ghoſt*, whom we *grieve by our ſins*, if we do not ſtudy holineſs.

(2.) The *love* of God obliges you to holineſs; yea, this is the end of the electing love of the Father, the purchaſing love of the Son, and the operating love of the Holy Ghoſt. It is the peculiar end of the *electing* love of the Father, who hath *choſen us that we ſhould be holy, and unblameable before him in love*, Eph. i. 4. He hath *choſen us to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit.*——It is the peculiar end of the *purchaſing* love of the Son, *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Titus ii. 14. *And who loved his church, and gave himſelf for it, that he might ſanctify and cleanſe it, by the waſhing of water, and preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot, nor wrinkle, nor any ſuch thing, but that it ſhould be holy, and without blemiſh*, Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.——It is alſo the peculiar end of the *operating* love of the Holy Ghoſt; his whole work in us, and for us, conſiſting in preparing us for, and enabling us to the duties of holineſs, and bringing forth the fruit thereof in us.—Believer, if you have any regard to the ſovereignty of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; any regard to the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, it obliges you to holineſs of heart and life.

(3.) The *glory* of God obliges you to holineſs, and makes it neceſſary. Would you glorify the *Father?* then *let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they ſeeing your good works, may glorify God. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.*—Would you glorify the *Son?* It is *the will of God*, that *all men honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* And how is this done? even by believing in him, and obeying him; *Ye are friends*, ye evidence yourſelves to be ſo, *if ye do whatſoever I command you.*—Would you glorify the *Holy Ghoſt?* It is by ſtudying holineſs; for we are *his temple;* and *holineſs becomes his houſe and temple for ever;* and he is diſhonoured when his temple is defiled.——Surely, believer, when I ſpeak to you, I cannot be ſuppoſed to ſpeak to one, that neither regards the

the ſovereign will, love, nor glory of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; though your holineſs ſhould all be loſt, and never regarded, which is impoſſible; yet here is reaſon enough for it.

2. Holineſs is neceſſary in reſpect of *yourſelves*; you are neceſſarily obliged to holineſs; your own honour and peace is concerned here: It is *gainful; Godlineſs is great gain, having the promiſe of this life, and that which is to come.* It is *pleaſant*; for, *Wiſdom's ways are pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace. There is no peace*, ſaith my God, *to the wicked;* but *the fruit of righteouſneſs is peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs, quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.* Yea, it is *honourable*, and the greateſt honour you can be advanced unto; to be holy, is to be like unto God.

3. Holineſs is neceſſary in reſpect of *others*; you are obliged to holineſs; it may tend to the conviction and converſion of others. On the one hand, it may tend to their *conviction*, and to ſtop their mouths, who are enemies of God, and that both here and hereafter. (1.) It may ſtop their mouths here in a preſent world, as you ſee, 1 Pet. ii. 15. *This is the will of God, that with well-doing, you may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men.* Ignorant fools may call you hypocrites; they may call you Antinomians, and enemies to the law: now, by *well-doing*, you give them an unanſwerable document, that though you be *dead to the law*, as a *covenant*, yet you put honour upon the law, as a *rule of holineſs*: and ſo make them aſhamed of their baſe calumny, according to that, 2 Pet. iii. 16. *Having a good conſcience, that whereas they ſpeak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be aſhamed that falſly accuſe your good converſation in Chriſt.* And, (2.) Holineſs in you, believer, may tend to ſtop the mouths of God's enemies hereafter, in the day of judgment: it is ſaid, *The ſaints ſhall judge the world*, not only as they will be aſſeſſors with the Son of God, and applaud him in all his judicial proceedings; but in regard their holineſs and good works will tend to the confuſion, and conviction of the wicked. And indeed the good works of the ſaints will meet one day, with a changed countenance, that they ſhall

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ſcarce know them: they ſee them now to be all black, defiled, and deformed; but they will then be brought forth beautiful and glorious, to the ſhame of the wicked, Matth. xxv. 34,—40.——On the other hand, your holineſs may tend to the *converſion* of others; *Having your converſation honeſt among the Gentiles, that whereas they ſpeak againſt you as evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they ſhall behold, glorify God in the day of viſitation*, 1 Pet. ii. 12. The holineſs of profeſſors hath ſometimes tended to the converſion of the profane, who, when the day of their gracious viſitation hath come, have glorified God on that account, 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2.; and therefore ſays Paul; *This is a faithful ſaying, and theſe things I will, that thou affirm conſtantly, that they which have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works: for theſe things are good, and profitable unto men*, Tit. iii. 18.

4. Holineſs is neceſſary in reſpect of your *ſtate*: you ſtand obliged to holineſs. Are you in a *juſtified* ſtate, accepted into friendſhip with a holy God, *Who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity?* Should you not evidence your juſtification by your ſanctification? Is it not neceſſary that you ſhould be holy, if you dwell in the preſence, walk in the ſight, and ly in the boſom of ſuch a holy God? Are you in a ſanctified ſtate? Wherefore was you regenerate? Wherefore got you a new heart, and a new nature, and a holy principle of grace, but that you ſhould be holy?—Are you in an *adopted* ſtate? Why ſo? but that you ſhould live like the children of God, and *be followers of God, as dear children!* O! was you not juſtified, adopted, and ſanctified for this end, that you might live unto God? If we be believers, what a ſhame is it for us, to live unſuitably to our ſtate, as many times we do? Is that all the thanks we give to God for his favours, that we ſhould trample his ſtatutes under our feet, diſhonour his name, break his laws, and grieve his Spirit? It does not become you; it is not like you, believer: he hath *loved you with an everlaſting love*, and *drawn you with loving-kindneſs*:—will you act like a devil in enmity againſt him, becauſe he hath acted like a God of love towards you? O fy for

ſhame,

ſhame, believer! *Tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in the ſtreets of Aſkelon; leſt the daughters of the Philiſtines rejoice, leſt the daughters of the uncircumciſed triumph*, 2 Sam. i. 20. Have we not the *hope of glory?* and ſhall we not, having this hope, *purify ourſelves even as he is pure?*—Are we *partakers of the precious promiſes?* Then *Having theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, and perfect holineſs in the fear of the Lord.*—Are we *heirs of glory?* and ſhall we not ſeek to have our right and title unto glory cleared? Rev. xxii. 14. *Bleſſed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates to the city;* that is, either that your right may be made evident, according to that word, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you;* that is, you thus evidence yourſelves to be my friends: or, concerning this right, know that there is a right of *merit*, and a right of *meetneſs*, both neceſſary: a right of *merit*, believer, you have not in yourſelf, but in Chriſt; and that is eſtabliſhed in juſtification through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: a right of *meetneſs* you muſt have in yourſelf from Chriſt, and that is in ſanctification and holineſs.—What ſhall I ſay, Are you not *dead to the law*, that you may *live unto God?* Are you not to teſtify your gratitude towards him, that hath provided another law-righteouſneſs than your own? Are you not to difference yourſelf from the world, that are walking in the broad way to hell and damnation, and under the curſe of the law, and the wrath of God?—Are you not *delivered from the wrath to come*, and of all men in the world under the greateſt obligations to be holy? Should you not ſtudy to pleaſe that God that hath pitied you? Hath he waſhed you in his blood? and ought you not, through his grace, to ſtudy, to let it be known to the world, that his blood hath a virtue to ſanctify you?—Yea, hath he not promiſed, *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, becauſe ye are not under the law, but under grace;* ſhould ye not ſtudy, through his grace, to let it be ſeen, that his promiſe is verified in you?

5. Holineſs is neceſſary in reſpect of the *danger* you are in, if ye do not ſtudy to holineſs. If you be a child of God, you are indeed freed from the curſe of the covenant of works, that penalty can never reach you; but, is it nothing to you, that your heavenly Father ſhould chaſtiſe you, hide his face from you, deny an anſwer to your prayers, hide your evidences of heaven from you, give you up to the tyranny of your luſts, and then take vengeance on your inventions.

6. Holineſs is neceſſary in reſpect of the *advantage* herein. You are obliged to holineſs; why? in this way you may come to live joyfully, and die comfortably: in this way your integrity may be ſupported, as it was with Job; in this way you may come to have ſweet communion with God, according to Chriſt's promiſe, John xiv. 21. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loves me;—and I will love him, and will manifeſt myſelf to him.* In this way you ſhall be fitted for ſerving him in your generation, 2 Tim. ii. 19. In this way you will have an evidence of your juſtification, 1 John iii. 9. In this way you ſhall bring down the bleſſing of God on every work of your hand, all that ye do ſhall proſper, Pſal. i. 4. Yea, in this way you ſhall become a public-good, a common good, a bleſſing, and a benefit to all about you, both in communicating good to them with whom you converſe, and in diverting judgments from theſe that are about you, as ten righteous men would have preſerved Sodom: O what a Sodom is the preſent generation! And as it is like Sodom and Gomorrah, and perhaps a thouſand times worſe, in reſpect of ſins againſt law and goſpel-light, which Sodom never had; ſo, if the Lord do not leave us a remnant, we ſhall be like Sodom and Gommorah, in reſpect of judgments. ——All theſe things, and a thouſand more that might be adduced, ſhould preſs you mightily to the ſtudy of holineſs, and living unto God: you are *dead to the law*, that you may *live unto God*. But next,

For *direction*. Now, here the queſtion may be propounded, *O how ſhall I live unto God?* I ſhall offer you no directions but one, which my text leads me to, and

and it is this. If you would *live unto God*, O ſtudy to be more and more *dead to the law*. The more you are dead to the law as a covenant, the more will you live according to the law as a rule: What! do you not find a legal ſpirit that remains with you, and weakens your hands in duties of holineſs? When you are wreſtling at duties in your own natural ſtrength, it is a legal old covenant way; and do you not find it a hard, heavy, weariſome taſk? I ſuppoſe there is little holineſs there: but when you are leaning on the ſtrength of Chriſt, do you not find your ſoul enlarged and quickened in duty? When you perform duty from a principle of ſlaviſh fear, that is a legal way; and do you not find your hearts weakened, and little heart to the work?—But on the contrary, when the love of Chriſt conſtrains you, is it not then that you run with pleaſure in the ways of his commandments? Yea, ſin hath dominion over you, when you are, and in ſo far as you are under the law; for the *motions of ſin* are by the law: the law irritates corruption, and cannot ſubdue it; for it is *the grace of God*, revealed in the goſpel, that effectually *teaches to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*. To be *dead to the law*, is to be *married to Chriſt*; it is to be brought off from the firſt Adam, and united to the ſecond Adam. And, believer, as you are in Chriſt, ſo you are to abide in him, if you would be fruitful, and live unto God; *As the branch cannot bear fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me*, John xv. 4. Now, to *abide in him*, is juſt to be *ſtrong in the grace that is in him*, and to continue to be ſtrong in him by faith; and this is neceſſary in order to fruitfulneſs: as, though an imp be grafted into the root, if it be not faſtened and take firm rooting, it does not come to fruitfulneſs; ſo the ſinner is made a Chriſtian, by being cut off from the law, and ingrafted into Chriſt; but he is not a fruitful Chriſtian, if he do not take a ſtrong grip of Chriſt, and draw virtue from him: therefore, *Abide in me, and I in you*, ſays Chriſt; and, O but it is well ſaid! for, if he do not abide in us, we cannot abide in him. We will never abide in him by the grace of

faith, unleſs he abide in us by the Spirit of faith. If we provoke God to take away his Spirit, our faith fades, fails, and decays; and then we depart from the Lord by an evil heart of unbelief.——Here is the way then to live unto God, and to bring forth fruit to him, even to die more and more to the firſt huſband, the law, and to live by faith upon your bleſſed Huſband, Chriſt.

QUEST. *But, by what outward means ſhould we thus live?* May we not *neglect duties*, ſince we are dead to the law? Nay, God forbid. It was the devil's temptation to Chriſt, to caſt himſelf headlong from the temple, becauſe God had promiſed to preſerve him in all his ways; ſo, believer, God hath promiſed to preſerve you; he hath promiſed that *ſin ſhall not have dominion over you*, and that you *ſhall never periſh*; and is the devil tempting you therefore to throw yourſelf down headlong from the temple, and from temple-means and ordinances, public and private? O tell that abominable devil, as Chriſt did, *It is written, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* If you neglect means, you tempt the Lord your God, who hath commanded you to uſe means, and made this the method of the communication of grace and ſtrength, to wit, in the uſe of ſuch means, as faith, prayer, reading, hearing, meditation, watchfulneſs: therefore, O be diligent in the uſe of theſe means; only do not confide in the means, by putting them in Chriſt's room: give means their own room, and do not expect, without the grace of the new covenant, that means will do the buſineſs. Grace is the ſpring from which the living water does flow, and means are the channel and pipes through which the water is conveyed; and if the fountain do not ſend our ſtreams, all the conduits and pipes in the world can never convey it unto us. Therefore, in the uſe of means, be ſtill looking to the Lord: look to him, both for grace to uſe the means, and for grace to bleſs the means. If you lay any ſtreſs upon the means, they become unprofitable. In the uſe of theſe means, O cry, cry mightily to the Lord, that he would kill your ſelf-confidence: cry for the Spirit of life, to quicken

quicken you, that you may live unto God; for, till the Spirit of life enter into the dry bones, there will be no ſtirring, no motion, no living to God: cry for the Spirit of faith, ſo as you may ſay with Paul in the context, *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me; and the life I live, is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* O cry for faith, and the aſſurance of faith: no doubt, one may have faith, and yet want that aſſurance, which we commonly call ſo; but whether there be ſome kind of aſſurance or perſuaſion in the nature of faith, is a queſtion that I do not here enter upon: only, this I am ſure of, from the word of God, that doubting is no part of faith; for faith and doubting are as oppoſite as light and darkneſs. Some believers indeed have many doubts, many doubts: why? becauſe they have little faith, little faith, little faith: *O thou of little faith, wherefore didſt thou doubt?* And I find the believer who *walks in darkneſs, and hath no light*, he is directed to faith, as the antidote againſt his darkneſs and doubting; *Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelf upon his God.* Cry, I ſay, for the Spirit of faith; and *faith will work by love:* cry for a goſpel-ſpirit; for I teſtify in the Lord's name, that goſpel-holineſs will never flouriſh among us, or in the generation, till we be more free of a legal ſpirit: and that we will not *live unto God*, unleſs we be *dead to the law.*

SERMON

SERMON XXVIII*.

The BEST BOND; or, the SUREST ENGAGEMENT.

JEREMIAH XXX. 21.

For, Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? ſaith the Lord.

MY friends, after that the firſt Adam's heart departed from the Lord, ſo as to violate the covenant of works, never one heart of all his poſterity could, or would have approached unto God again, but had remained in their natural enmity againſt him, had not the ſecond Adam ſo engaged his heart unto God, in our favours, as to draw the hearts of many after him: and if we could this day ſee into Chriſt's heart, and diſcover his heart-kindneſs in this matter, ſo as to unite our hearts to him, and to God in him, and get the knot ſealed in the ſacrament with God's ſeal; it would make this a day to be much remembered to all eternity. O then, let your hearts be looking up to the Lord, that you may ſee in to the heart and boſom of this ſcripture, and in to the myſtery of this great queſtion, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? ſaith the Lord.*

The Lord, by the prophet Jeremiah, had been comforting his church, by ſeveral excellent promiſes relating

* This was an action ſermon preached immediately before the adminiſtration of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, at Dunfermline, July 19th, 1724. To which is annexed, a Diſcourſe on the ſame ſubject, delivered after the ſolemn work was ended. This ſermon hath undergone five editions.

to

to their return out of the Babyloniſh captivity, typical of the glorious things reſerved for the church in the days of the Meſſias; particularly in the preceeding verſe, it is promiſed, that they ſhall be bleſt with an excellent government, *Their nobles ſhall be of themſelves*, they ſhall not have ſtrangers and enemies to be their judges, but theſe of their own nation. *Their governor ſhall proceed from the midſt of them.* This hath a reference to Chriſt our Governor, David our King, as you may ſee by comparing this with ver. 9. *They ſhall ſerve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raiſe up unto them.* This Governor is of ourſelves, being *in all things made like unto his brethren: I will cauſe him to draw near, and he ſhall approach unto me.*— It is a ſingle perſon that is ſpoken of, and the perſon is the GOVERNOR, and the GOVERNOR is CHRIST. God the Father did cauſe him, as Mediator, to draw near and approach to him; he commanded and authorized him to do it; he ſanctified and ſealed him for this end; he appointed and anointed him for this purpoſe, and he accepted of him, and declared himſelf well-pleaſed in him; and therefore he ſpeaks of it with wonderful pleaſure, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?* When God draws a perſon near to him, he is even delighted with that approach to him, whereof he himſelf is the cauſe; much more if it be ſuch a perſon as here, the Governor of Iſrael; *For who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?* Here is the iſſue of the excellent promiſes that were made to Iſrael, by way of anticipation of ſome objection that might be made, How ſhall all this be done? Why, Chriſt the Governor hath engaged for all that either God calls for from you, or that he promiſes to you.— He is one that *ſhall not fail, nor be diſcouraged, till he hath ſet judgment in the earth*, Iſa. xliii. 4. Thus all the promiſes come to us in Chriſt; they come from God thro' him, and ſhould lead us up to him, *in whom they are all Yea and Amen.* They are rivulets that ſweetly flow out and run forth from the ocean to the city of God, to the houſe of the mourner, to the field of the with-

withered and decayed, to the habitation of the hungry and thirſty, yea, to the grave of the dry bones, to make *the dry land ſprings of water*, and to make *the wilderneſs to bloſſom as the roſe*. What theſe excellent promiſes are, that thus run forth, you may ſee in the preceding part of the chapter: For example, ver. 17. though the wound ſeem incurable, God will make a cure for it; and though you be thrown off at all hands, and thruſt out at every door, and none ſeek after thee, yet *I will put honour upon thee*; yea, *I will glorify thee, and thou ſhalt not be ſmall*, as it is ver. 19. And the ſum of all the promiſes is, ver. 22. *Ye ſhall be my people, and I will be your God*: I will work in you all that you want; and that is, *You ſhall be my people*: and I will be to you all that you need; and that is, *I will be your God*. O that we could take hold of this promiſe! It is as much as to ſay, I will make you holy, and what I would have you to be; for, *Ye ſhall be my people*; and I will make you happy; for, *I will be your God*. O! but upon what conſideration, or on what account will he do all this? My text opens the ground, *For, who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? ſaith the Lord.*— Why will he do ſo much kindneſs to any poor worm of Adam's houſe? Why, becauſe Chriſt, as Mediator, hath engaged his heart to approach unto God in their room, to do all that was requiſite for making a vent to this kindneſs and favour of God towards man.

I know that ſome take the words to be ſpoken of the people of God their drawing near by faith, and in point of duty engaging themſelves to approach to him thro' his grace. This is a conſequent that follows upon the other; and therefore I ſhall not exclude it from its own room in the application of this ſubject, if the Lord will. But, with the beſt interpreters that I have ſeen, I apprehend it is ſpoken of Chriſt, holding out his undertaking for an elect world in the covenant of redemption, or grace, and becoming our Surety, engaging himſelf to the Father for us, in the view of our having ruined ourſelves, and broken our own credit and intereſt with God. The firſt Adam, our natural and federal head, in the covenant of works, he brake the covenant, and violated

lated the engagement that he made of approaching to God, with his perfect, perſonal obedience; and ſo he, and we in him, loſt all our power with God. But behold, the ſecond Adam, having his heart filled and fraughted with love to a company of ſinful miſerable worms, ſuch as are here preſent, he takes on the engagement that Adam brake: and he being a perſon of intire credit, it was a done bargain, and God iſſues out all bleſſings on his account: *For, who is he that engaged his heart?*

In the words you may notice theſe four things.

1. The proper *work* and *office* of our Lord Jeſus as Mediator, *viz.* to *approach unto God*, and that for us, and in our room and ſtead, as the High-prieſt of our profeſſion. The prieſts are ſaid to draw near to God, Lev. x. 21. and xxi. 17, 18. It is ſaid, Exod. xx. 21. that *Moſes drew near unto the thick darkneſs, where God was.* So did Chriſt, our great Moſes, draw near and approach unto God.

2. Notice, in the words, his *cordial compliance* with his work; *He engaged his heart* to it: received a commandment of the Father, who cauſed him to approach; he being the original cauſe and ſpring, as the connecting particle *for* does ſhew; FOR, *who is this* that does approach? Could any do it without me? No: the Father was firſt at work; but Chriſt was as willing to the work as his Father was to employ him: he *engaged his heart* to it; that is, he bound and obliged himſelf to it; he *undertook for his heart*, as ſome read it; he undertook for his ſoul, that in the fulneſs of time it ſhould be made an offering for ſin. His own voluntary compliance with his Father's will, and his compaſſion to fallen man, engaged him: and he was hearty and reſolute, free and chearful in it, and made nothing of the difficulties that ſtood in the way.

3. You have here the *ſingularity* of this fact, and the *wonderfulneſs* of it, expreſſed in the queſtion, *Who is this that engaged his heart unto me?* It points out the greatneſs of the perſon, the admirable nature of the work he eſſays. Chriſt is in all this matter truly wonderful; and when it is a God that expreſſes it in

this manner, we may well aſk it with admiration, Who is this that engaged his heart to ſuch an undertaking? And then,

4. You have the *divine teſtimony* annexed to the whole, in theſe words, *ſaith the Lord.* Here is a noble ground for faith, even the teſtimony of the God of truth: let the mouth of unbelief be ſtopt, for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it. God's teſtimony is our ſecurity; and we need no better than the word of a God teſtifying concerning his eternal Son. *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? ſaith the Lord.*

OBSERV. *That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the eternal Son of God, cordially and willingly engaged himſelf to approach unto God in the work and buſineſs of our redemption.*

I ſhall endeavour to clear this doctrine, and upon it ſpeak to the ſeveral parts of the text, in the following method: after that we have cleared the truth of the doctrine, we ſhall,

I. Shew what a *wonderful perſon* this is, that engaged his heart to approach unto God; as ſeems to be pointed out in this queſtion, *Who is this?*

II. The *nature* of the *work* that he engages himſelf in, while it is an engagement to approach unto God.

III. The *ſingularity* of the *fact*, included in the manner of the expreſſion, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto God?*

IV. The *reaſons* of the doctrine; or, why Chriſt came under this engagement: together with the reaſons of our faith concerning it; or, why it is, that JEHOVAH's teſtimony is added in theſe words, *ſaith the Lord.*

V. Draw ſome *inferences* by way of *application* of the doctrine, as the Lord ſhall pleaſe to aſſiſt.

Now,

Now, before I proceed to the method here laid down, I would offer you ſome ſcriptural proofs of the doctrine. That Chriſt willingly engaged himſelf herein, is evident,

1. From his *accepting* of the work and office; *When ſacrifice and offering would not, then ſaid he, Lo I come,* &c. Pſalm xl. 7, 8. compared with Heb. x. 5, 6, 7.

2. From his reckoning it his *glory* and *honour*, that he hath taken this office upon him at his Father's call; as is plain from that expreſſion, Heb. v. 4, 5. *No man takes this honour to himſelf, but he that is called of God as was Aaron: So Chriſt glorified not himſelf, to be made an High-prieſt; but he that ſaid to him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee: Thou art a Prieſt for ever.*

3. From his promiſing to *depend* on his Father for his *help* and *aſſiſtance* in the work; Iſa. xlix. 5. *Though Iſrael be not gathered,* ſays Chriſt, *yet ſhall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God ſhall be my ſtrength.* Iſa. l. 7. *The Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded; therefore will I ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed.* Hence it was, that *he endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame. I will put my truſt in him,* ſays Chriſt, Heb. ii. 13.

4. For his promiſing *ſubjection* to his Father's will, in bearing reproaches, and laying down his life for thoſe that were given to him; Iſaiah l. 5, 9. *I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.* And John x. 17. *I lay down my life; and this commandment have I received of my Father.* And,

5. According as he promiſed, ſo did he *accompliſh* the promiſe: His heart was ſet upon the work in the hardeſt part thereof; *I have a baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitened till all be accompliſhed?* And never did he reſt till he could ſay, *It is finiſhed; I have glorified thee on earth, I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do,* John xvii. 4.——Thus he fulfilled the engagement he came under. And then,

6. He expects the *glory promiſed* to him, and the accompliſhment of the *glorious promiſe* that was made to him upon his fulfilling his engagements; *I have glorified thee on earth: and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had from thee before the world was*, John xvii. 4, 5. Yea, he challenges it as his due every way, verſe 24. *Father, I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me: for thou haſt loved me before the foundation of the world.*——And thus in all theſe things you ſee the *truth* of the doctrine cleared; and ſo we proceed to the illuſtration of the general method.

I. The *firſt* thing I promiſed, was, To ſhew what a *wonderful perſon* this is, that engages his heart to approach unto God; as is pointed out by the queſtion, *Who is this?* There are theſe following things wonderful in this perſon engaging.

1. *Who is this?* I anſwer, who but the *eternal Son* of the eternal Father, one God with him and the eternal Spirit; even the *King eternal* and *immortal*, who is ſaid to be *over all, God bleſſed for ever, Amen.* Rom. ix. 5. AMEN, ſays the apoſtle; and AMEN let your hearts ſay to it, by putting the crown of abſolute divine Sovereignty and ſupreme Deity upon the head of our LORD JESUS this day, in oppoſition to the damnable error of Arianiſm, that is like to take deep root in Britain and Ireland, and ſpread like a gangrene, and eat like a cancer. Who is he as to his perſon? He is the Son of God: and who is he as to his nature and eſſence? He is "the ſame in ſubſtance, e-"qual in power and glory with the Father and the "Holy Ghoſt." He is *God over all, bleſſed for ever*; and curſed is the communicant that ſhall not ſay AMEN. Under the great ſeal of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, we make the apoſtle's confeſſion of faith, 1 John v. 20. that if any aſk, *Who is this?* We anſwer, *This is the true God, and eternal life.* This glorious engager, the Lord Jeſus, whoſe death we commemorate, is, with reſpect to his divine nature, the true God; and

he

he hath upon his veſture and upon his thigh written this name, *King of kings, and Lord of lords.* This is the eternal Word, that was made fleſh; he took upon him our nature, and became man, that he might appeaſe God. The infinitely great quality of the perſon does highly commend his loving undertaking and engagement. But,

2. *Who is this?* It is *One*, who, *though he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of man; and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs*, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8. It is he, who, though his *generation cannot be declared, his goings forth having been from of old, from everlaſting*; yet engaged to be *made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law*, and was *cut off out of the land of the living*. It is he, who, though he was the *Prince of the kings of the earth*, and the *King of kings*, yet engaged to become a *ſervant of ſervants*, and accordingly *girds himſelf* to ſerve them, and *waſh their feet*, John xiii. 4, 5. It is he, who, though he be admirable in his ſovereignty, *His kingdom being over all*, yet is matchleſs in his condeſcendency.—— Though he is one that could never have been known, unleſs he had made himſelf known; yet he hath ſhown himſelf to be one that is mighty in word and deed, ſaying, *It is I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave*, Iſaiah lxiii. 1. It is he, who tho' he be the only Son, and dearly Beloved of God, yet engages to quit his Father's company, and take on his wrath and indignation. If it had been a ſimple privation of his Father's countenance for a little, it had been more than all the ſons of men were worth; for he was *daily from eternity his Father's delight, rejoicing always before him*, Prov. viii. 30. But it muſt be more: he engages to take on our ſin and guilt, and to bear our griefs; and, which is ſtill more, to undergo his Father's wrath; inſomuch, that though the Father's delight in him was never changed or altered, yet he engaged to become ſuch a ſtrange object of his delight, as that he ſhould

delight

delight to bruiſe him, and take pleaſure in making him a ſacrifice; Iſaiah liii. 10. *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him:* he took pleaſure in bruiſing him in the mortar of his infinite vengeance, till he bruiſed his blood out of his heart and veins, and his ſoul out of his body; for, *He ſwate great drops of blood in the garden;* yea, bled to death on the croſs, and then gave up the ghoſt. *Who is this?* Who but he who was the pleaſant object of God's infinite love? Chriſt was loved of the Father in his dying, and for his dying in our room: he loves him in himſelf, and loves him as a ſacrifice; for it was a *ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour unto God*, Eph. v. 2. But, O dear bought to Chriſt, was this love!

3. *Who is this?* who but that *glorious One*, whom we have infinitely diſobliged by our ſin, and had diſengaged to do us any favour, by our revolt from him, by breaking our engagements in the covenant of works, and by continual rebellion againſt him, and *vexing his Holy Spirit*, Iſaiah lxiii. 10. *Who is this?* Even he whom the party that he engages for on the one ſide, does moſt loath and deſpiſe; for he *is deſpiſed and rejected of men: we hid as it were our faces from him: he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not;* and yet he engages for theſe that were in actual oppoſition and enmity to him: for, while we were yet enemies, he engages for us; *He died for the ungodly*, Romans v. 6. And *God commends his love towards us, in that, while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us*, verſe 8. And *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, ver. 10. He loved them, that loathed him. Again,

4. *Who is this?* He is one that ſtood in *no need of us*, being infinitely happy in himſelf, and had loſt nothing, though all mankind had periſhed for ever; and yet, before we were not happy, he would expoſe himſelf to the greateſt miſery, reſolving that he would not be happy without us. He would rather come and *endure the contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf*, reproach, blaſphemy, and all manner of indignities: *though he was rich, yet for our ſake he became poor*, and though he was exalted

exalted to the higheſt, yet he would be humbled to the loweſt. Let all the excellencies of heaven and earth be put together; let all the perfections that ever the world heard of, and infinitely more; let them be all gathered together, and infinity added to them, and all ſhining in one perſon, and that is Chriſt, O how rich! how glorious! And yet this perſon engages to die for vile worms, whom he might have trampled under his feet for ever.

5. *Who is this?* Why, he is one that could lay his *hand upon both parties* that were at variance, God and man; and ſo lay hold on both, and bring them together in himſelf, though at an infinite diſtance from one another; *He hath made peace by the blood of his croſs, and reconciled heaven and earth*, Col. i. 20, 21. He is one, that was able not only to remove the partition betwixt Jews and Gentiles, man and man, but to take down the partition-wall betwixt God and man, to bring the ſinner to God, and God to the ſinner; *Chriſt hath once ſuffered for ſin, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God*, 1 Pet. iii. 18. *God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf:* and ſo he is one that brings both together by his almighty arm; *This man ſhall be the peace*; this God-man is our peace, being a friend to both parties: being God, he is ſuch a friend to God, that he would let him want nothing of his due; he will give juſtice every farthing, and retrieve the whole glory that ſin defaced: and being man, he is ſuch a friend to man, that he will pay all our debt, recover all our loſs, yea, and gain much more to us than ever we loſt.

6. *Who is this?* He is one whoſe name is called WONDERFUL, Iſa. ix. 6. But, who can tell the wonders of his perſon, the wonders of his perfections, the wonders of his offices, relations, appearances, birth, life, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, and interceſſion? the wonders of his righteouſneſs, the wonders of his purchaſe, the wonders of his love, in its height and depth, length and breadth; in its eternity, efficacy, and conſtancy? He is one whoſe name is WONDERFUL, whoſe followers, that bear his name, are for ſigns and wonders, Iſa. viii. 18. *Behold I and the children which thou*

thou haſt given me, are for ſigns and wonders. Zech iii. 8. *Thou and thy fellows, that ſit before thee, are men wondered at.* And indeed the more of Chriſt that they have about them, the more they do become a world's wonder, as Chriſt himſelf was. What ſhall I ſay! Time would fail to ſpeak of theſe things, and to mention his wonderful acts, his wonderful counſels, his wonderful way upon the earth, and in the hearts of his people; his wonderful works towards the children of men, both in judgment and mercy; and his wonderful conduct towards his own children. Let it ſuffice that this is he, whoſe name is, and ſhall be called, WONDERFUL.

II. The *ſecond* thing propoſed, was, To ſpeak of the *nature* of the *work* he engages himſelf in, while it is ſaid, he *engaged his heart to approach unto God.* The prieſts under the law, their approaching unto God did but adumbrate and ſhadow forth our High-prieſt his approach unto God, in our room and ſtead. In order to clear this point then, in the general, I premiſe theſe two things.

1*ſt*, All mankind were *barred out from the preſence of God*, ſo as they could not approach to him in their own perſons; and that by a threefold bar.

1. The bar of a *broken* and *violated law*, or covenant of works. The covenant of works, you know, was, Do and LIVE, otherwiſe ye ſhall die: in which covenant the precept was Do, and the promiſe was LIFE, and the penalty was DEATH. Man, by his ſin, hath broken the precept of doing, forfeited the promiſe of life, and incurred the penalty of death: now, if we were to approach God in mercy, this broken precept muſt be repaired, this forfeited life muſt be redeemed, this incurred penalty muſt be executed, and endured. Here is a bar that neither men nor angels can draw and take out of the way, in order to our approach unto God.

2. The bar of God's *injured perfections*, particularly God's *infinite holineſs*, which ſtands up for the defence of the precept of the law; inſomuch that none can approach to a holy God, unleſs his holineſs be vindicate

by

by a perfect obedience. Again, God's *infinite juſtice*, which ſtands up for the penalty, or threatening of the law; inſomuch that none can approach to a juſt God, unleſs his juſtice be ſatisfied by a complete ſacrifice.—Now, as our natural want of conformity to the law makes the holineſs of God ſtand in the way of our approach to him; ſo our natural want of ability to give ſatisfaction, makes the juſtice of God to be a bar againſt our approach. O! who will draw this bar of God's injured perfections!

3. The bar of *natural enmity* and *ſin* on our part; Iſa. lix. 2. *Your iniquities have ſeparate betwixt you and your God*, ſo as we cannot approach to him. We are *enemies to God by wicked works*. This is a bar that cannot be broken, but by an almighty arm.—Thus, I ſay, all mankind was barred out from the preſence of God; no approaching to him.

2*dly*, I premiſe, That the work of him who ſhall approach to God, in our room, and as our repreſentative, muſt include the *breaking of theſe bars*. He that will engage to approach unto God as our head, to bring us back to God, muſt engage to break theſe bars: And ſo,

1. To break the bar of a *violated covenant of works*. And accordingly, Chriſt comes; and, by his obedience to the death, *He magnifies the law, and makes it honourable*: The precept of the law that we had broken, he muſt fulfil, by obeying perfectly; the promiſe of eternal life, which we had forfeited, he muſt recover by redeeming the forfeiture, *bringing in everlaſting righteouſneſs*; the threatening and penalty of eternal death he muſt endure, or the equivalent, by coming under the *curſe of the law*.

2. To break the bar of God's *injured perfections*, by vindicating the holineſs of God, and ſatisfying the juſtice of God, that ſo theſe and the like injured attributes of the divine Majeſty may not ſtand in the way; or, while they do, there is no approaching unto God.

3. To break the bar of man's *natural enmity* againſt God, otherways he that engages himſelf to approach unto God, cannot bring us to God with him.

These things being premised, we may the more easily see what is the *work* that the Lord Jesus engaged his heart unto, in approaching unto God: he comes to God in our room, who could not approach in our own persons. It is below the majesty of a great king, to treat and transact immediately with a guilty rebel and traitor: and so it is below the majesty of the great God, to transact immediately with wretched sinners: and who then will approach? Therefore he transacts immediatley with Christ, a person of equal dignity with himself, as to his divine nature; and a person able to break these bars, and so make an open door for himself as Redeemer, and then, for all the redeemed at his back, to approach unto God as their eternal rest and happiness: and all this he does, by fulfilling the broken law; for, he *came to fulfil all righteousness*, by satisfying God's injured perfections; insomuch, that *God is well-pleased for his righteousness-sake:* and by destroying man's natural enmity; insomuch, that they are *reconciled to God, by the death of his Son.*

But, more particularly, I would shew here, 1. What *engagements* Christ came under. 2. What *approach* did he make to God, under these engagements. 3. Under what *considerations* are we to view God to whom he engages to approach. 4. In what *station* did he engage to approach unto God.

1*st*, What *engagement* did Christ come under, when he engaged himself to approach unto this God? He came under engagements about the whole work of our redemption. And,

1. He engaged to put himself in the *form of a servant*, by taking on our nature, and taking our place in law, that so the law might reach him in the room of the guilty sinner; otherways the law-curse due to us could never have reached him. Now, to this engagement belong several things, which I shall shortly deliver in so many spiritual expressions.—He engaged *to be made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.*—He engaged, even *he who knew no sin, to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* And thus,

2. He

2. He engaged to ſatisfy, not only the *law*, in all its commands and demands, but alſo all the *injured attributes* of the divine Majeſty, by bringing in *everlaſting rigateouſneſs*.—He engaged *to give himſelf a ſacrifice*; and *to give his ſoul an offering for ſin*; and *to give his life a ranſom for many*.—He engaged to *make peace by the blood of his croſs*, and ſo to repair the breach betwixt God and man, making way by his blood, to the holy of holies, that we might *have boldneſs to enter into the holieſt, by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way, conſecrate to us through the vail, that is to ſay, his fleſh*, that we might come again to God with *full aſſurance of faith*. And in order to this,

3. He engaged to redeem by *power* as well as by *price*, and *to make a willing people in the day of his power*; and that, having bruiſed the head of the ſerpent, and deſtroyed the works of the devil, he *ſhould bring forth his priſoners out of the pit wherein there was no water*.—He engaged to *lead captivity captive, to take the prey from the mighty, that the lawful captive might be delivered*, Iſaiah lxix. 24, 25.; and ſo to reſtore the loſt image of God upon man, and to make them *partakers of the divine nature*. And thus,

4. He engaged not only to *deſtroy ſin*, and to condemn it in the fleſh, becauſe it tended to deſtroy God's law, to darken his glory, and to ſtrike at his being, as well as to ruin the ſinner; but alſo, to *deſtroy death, and bring life and immortality to light*:—He engages to *come, that we might have life, and that we might have it more immediately*.—And in all theſe Chriſt becomes engaged to the Father, for our debt, for our duty, and for our ſafety. And as he became engaged *to God for us*, ſo he became engaged *to us for God*: that having engaged to God for our *debt*, we ſhould be *juſtified*; having engaged for our *duty*, we ſhould be *ſanctified*; and that having engaged for our *ſafety*, we ſhould be *glorified*, and ſafely brought to heaven, to be for ever with the Lord.

(1.) He engaged for our *debt*, that it ſhould be paid every farthing, to the uttermoſt that the infinite holineſs of God could command in the precept of the law,

and to the uttermoſt that the infinite juſtice of God could demand in the threatening of the law; and ſo he is *able to ſave to the uttermoſt*, becauſe *he ever lives to make interceſſion*, upon the ground of that complete payment that he made by his obedience unto death. And here ſtands the ground of our juſtification before God; this ground he engaged to God for us to lay down, and upon this ground he engaged to us that he ſhall be juſtified, ſaying, *I will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

(2.) He engaged not only for our debt, but for our *duty*: having engaged to God to make a purchaſe of all grace and holineſs for us, he engages, in his promiſe to us, *to give us the new heart, and the new ſpirit to make us know the Lord*; and *to put his Spirit within us, and cauſe us to walk in his ſtatutes; to put his fear in our hearts, that we ſhall not depart from him*: and conſequently that we ſhall not ſin the ſin unto death, nor live and die under the power of ſin: and that *ſin ſhall not have a* final *dominion over us; but that the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall free us from the law of ſin and death.*——And in conſequence of theſe two engagements for debt and for duty,

(3.) He alſo engages for our *ſafety*, ſaying to his Father, *I give them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh; neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand*, John x. 28. He engages to the Father, *That of all that he hath given him, he ſhall loſe nothing, but ſhall raiſe it up at the laſt day*; and that *they ſhall all be with him where he is, to behold his glory.* And hence iſſue all the promiſes wherein alſo he engages to us for God, ſuch as, *that he will ſave us from falling, and preſent us faultleſs before the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy*; and that though we may be ſometimes carried captive of our enemies by conſtraint, yet that we ſhall overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and *ſit with him on his throne, even as he overcame, and is ſet down with his Father on his throne*: And that no croſs ſhall come, but what ſhall be for our advantage in the end, whatever for the preſent it ſeem to be to our ſenſe; but that

all

all things ſhall work together for our good who love him, and are the called according to his purpoſe.

This leads me to a queſtion, Why, ſay you *who may expect a ſhare of this engagement of Chriſt? Does he engage in behalf of us all!* I anſwer, in ſuch a manner as concerns all that hear me, that he engaged in behalf of all that were given him of the Father; and that none of all that hear this goſpel, may look upon themſelves as ſhut out, he expreſſes it thus, John xi. 37. *All that the Father hath given me, ſhall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out:* And conſequently he engages in behalf of all that ſhall not exclude themſelves from the benefit of this glorious engagement, by their final unbelief, in rejecting this Chriſt, and refuſing to be ſaved on theſe terms, which Chriſt engaged to fulfil. And ſo the door is open to you all, to put in for a full ſhare of all that Chriſt hath engaged to do; eſpecially if you think that your own perſonal bonds and engagements, vows, promiſes, and covenants, are not ſo good and ſufficient as Chriſt's perſonal engagement in your room: think you ſo, man, woman? O then, here is a good bargain for you; you that have no money to pay your debt; no grace to perform your duty; no ſtrength to ſecure your ſafety; O here is a Chriſt engaging to God for your debt, your duty, and your ſafety! O let your heart ſay with application, AMEN, it is a good bargain for me; and if ſo, God hath before-hand ſaid AMEN, *ſo let it be.* In a word, the ſum of Chriſt's engagement, that he came under in his approach to God, was, to fulfil God's law, to vindicate his holineſs, to ſatisfy his juſtice, to bear his wrath in our room, and to be *made ſin for us*, and ſo to be made a *curſe for us*, 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. He engaged to be made a ſacrifice, a ranſom, a propitiation for us, and to be all that the glory of God's perfections in the matter of our ſalvation required.——Thus he engaged himſelf to approach to God.

2*dly*, What *approach* did he make to God under theſe engagements? In ſhort,

1. It

1. It was a *near* approach, by God's own allowance and appointment. See the context; *I will cauſe him to draw* NEAR, *and he ſhall approach to me.* We behoved to have ſtood at an infinite diſtance from God to all eternity, had not Chriſt been allowed to come near in our room. But behold, he made a near approach under the ſhadow of lawful authority; his Father authorized him therein, and cauſed him to approach: God the Father is the primary cauſe of our ſalvation; *This commandment*, ſays Chriſt, *have I received of my Father*, John x. 15.——It is his Father's will that he came to do, Pſalm xl. 8. And how near Chriſt approaches to God in our room, under this authority, allowance, and command, who can tell among men or angels? For he came ſo near, as to lay his hand upon God; yea, to take God and all his glorious perfections, all his ſeemingly jarring attributes in his arms, as it were, and reconcile them one to another, and bind them together with the bond of infinite amity and harmony, to the higheſt glory of each of them, in the matter of our ſalvation: And hence, upon this near approach it was ſaid, *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.* Therefore,

2. It was a *bold* approach, by God's own aſſiſtance; as well as *near*, by his allowance. This is evident alſo in the text, *I will cauſe him to draw near*; and *Who is he that engaged his heart to approach unto me? ſaith the Lord.* It was a bold and couragious approach indeed; but it was by his Father's help and aſſiſtance; Iſa. l. 7. *The Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded*; yea, *therefore have I ſet my face like a flint.* It was ſuch a bold adventure, as none could have made but himſelf. And yet,

3. It was an *humble* approach: for, *Though he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he* HUMBLED *himſelf, and took upon him the form of a ſervant*, Phil. ii. 8. He became his Father's humble ſervant in the work of our redemption; *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold.* He ſerved him in a ſtate of humiliation, from the time of his incarnation to the

the time of his exaltation. He was meek and lowly while he offered his humble ſervice to God for our ſake, ſtooping down to waſh our feet, to waſh our hearts, to waſh our conſciences, to waſh our ſouls in his own blood, ſaying, *If I waſh thee not, thou haſt no part in me.* His approach to God was an humble and reverential approach, with holy filial fear and regard of his Father; therefore it is ſaid, Heb. v. 7. that *in the days of his fleſh, he offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears, to him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard in that he feared.* How humbly did he cry to his Father in the garden, when he ſaid, *Father, if it be thy will, let this cup paſs from me, nevertheleſs, not my will, but thine be done: Now is my ſoul troubled, and what ſhall I ſay: Father, ſave me from this hour; but for this cauſe came I to this hour: Father, glorify thy name.* It was in the ſaddeſt earneſt, and deepeſt humility, that he approached to his Father in this work.

4. It was a *ſolemn* approach: *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?* It is I, ſays Chriſt; and he ſays it with a ſolemnity, *Lo I come.* Pſal. xl. 7. Lo I COME, *in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.* Lo I COME; as if he had ſaid, Let heaven and earth be witneſſes to this approach of mine; let God and all the creatures of God atteſt it; for I am not aſhamed of this work which the Father hath given me to do: *Lo I come.*——Other characters of this approach may fall in upon the next general head: therefore I go to the next particular here premiſed, which will alſo further illuſtrate the nature of this approach.

3*dly*, Under what *conſideration* are we to view the God to whom he approached? *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto* ME? What ME? It is to ME, ſays Jehovah. And here we would conſider the God to whom he approached in our room, in theſe following reſpects.

1. He engaged to approach unto God as an *abſolute* God. Chriſt, the ſecond Perſon of the adorable Trinity, *perſonally* conſidered, engaged in our name to approach

to

to God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, *eſſentially* conſidered; to approach to the throne of infinite Majeſty. We have to do with a God in Chriſt, in all our approaches; and may not approach to a God out of Chriſt, otherwiſe we would be confounded: but Chriſt had to do with a God by himſelf. Chriſt is the Mediator betwixt God and man, but there was no mediator betwixt God and Chriſt: Chriſt muſt approach, as well he could, to God himſelf immediately, that we, through his mediation, might have acceſs to God.—It was a ſaying of Luther's, *Nolo Deum abſolutum*; "Lord, deliver me from an abſolute God, a God out "of Chriſt;" for as he is terrible to ſinners, ſo, in himſelf conſidered, he *dwells in light to which no man can approach*, 1 Tim. vi. 16. But this inacceſſible Being is the God to whom Chriſt did approach.

2. He engaged to approach unto God as a *commanding* God, commanding perfect obedience, according to the tenor of the covenant of works; commanding perfect obedience in man's own perſon as the condition of life; and now, ſeeing, in the covenant of grace, a change of perſons is allowed, but no change of the terms or conditions, but that our holy God will ſtill be a commanding God, Chriſt accepts of the terms, and engages to fulfil the condition of life, be the command what will: *Lo, I come, to do thy will.* Father, what is thy command? I come to thee as a commanding God, a Law-giver, to obey thy law; yea, *Thy law is within my heart*; or, as it is in the Hebrew, it is IN THE MIDST OF MY BOWELS. None, that had any blemiſh, was to approach or come near unto God, Levit. xxi. 21. If there had been any blemiſh in the perſon or righteouſneſs of Chriſt, he could not have approached to an infinitely holy and commanding God; and his coming to God under this conſideration, is juſt his coming under the law, or under the command, in our room.

3. He engaged to approach unto God as a *threatening* God, threatening death and wrath to the tranſgreſſors of his command, and ſaying, as Lev. x. 3. *I will be ſanctified by all that approach, or come nigh unto me*; I will

I will either be ſanctified by them, or ſanctified upon them: and thus he had God do deal with, not only as a Commander and Law-giver, requiring obedience; but as a Judge requiring ſatisfaction when the law is broken. He approaches to God, not only as a God of infinite holineſs, whoſe command muſt be obeyed; but as a God of infinite juſtice, whoſe threatening muſt be execute: and therefore, he coming to God in the room of theſe that had broken the command, and incurred the threatening, it muſt follow that.

4. He engaged to approach to God as an *angry* God, an *offended* Deity, and an *Avenger of blood: The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all*; and under this load of ſin and guilt he approaches to the God, that was to take vengeance upon ſin in his own perſon, and all the vengeance that ſin deſerved: He engaged to approach to God as a diſpleaſed and incenſed God, that he might pleaſe him by his obedience, and pacify him by his ſatisfaction. He engaged to approach to that God, who is a *conſuming fire* to ſinners; and, taking their ſins along with him, he goes in to the very midſt of that devouring fire, which would have devoured and deſtroyed the ſinner himſelf eternally, that he might quench the flame of that fire with his blood; though he was burnt to death in the cauſe, that we might not burn for ever in hell.—— What is hell, but the fire of God's wrath? It is juſt God himſelf, as a conſuming fire, that is the hell of hell. It was a lamentable moan of a man upon his death-bed once, "We have ſome in this life that will "go to a quire for us, ſome that will ſay maſs for us, "ſome that will plow for us, and ſome that will pray "for us; but, O where is there one that will go to "hell for us!" But behold, here is one that engaged his heart to approach to God, as a conſuming fire, and ſo to go hell, and quench the fire of it for us; yea, and to drink off the cup of God's red-hot boiling vengeance to the bottom. For he engaged to approach to God as a God of terrible Majeſty, being content that infinite juſtice ſhould act upon him a tragedy of

blood and wounds, that our ſalvation might be obtained without any detriment to divine juſtice, and to the higheſt glory of all the other divine perfections.—When Chriſt approached to God as an *abſolute* God, he came near, as it were, to the ſeat of his Majeſty, to preſent himſelf in our room; when he approached to God as a *commanding* God, he came near, as it were, to the throne of his holineſs, and there he was an obedient ſubject in our room; when he approached to God as a *threatening* God, then he came near, as it were, to his bench of judgment, and there he was a condemned pannel at the bar in our room; and when he approached to God as an *angry* and *offended* God, then he came near, as it were, to the tribunal of juſtice, the fiery tribunal of his indignation, and there the ſentence was execute upon him, while he gave himſelf to incenſed juſtice in our room.—Now, Chriſt having thus approached to God, according to his engagement, the God to whom he approached is ſo well-pleaſed with this approach of his, that now, by an act paſt at the ſame tribunal of juſtice, where he was ſolemnly condemned to death in our room and ſtead, he is as ſolemnly juſtified and abſolved in our room; therefore he is ſaid to be *juſtified by the Spirit*, 1 Tim. iii. 16.; and Chriſt himſelf ſays, *He is near that juſtifies me*, Iſaiah l. 8. And therefore *the Lord is well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake:* and when the Spirit of Chriſt *convinces of righteouſneſs*, he will demonſtrate this from that argument, that *Chriſt hath gone to his Father*, John xvi. 10.——And now the approach that he makes to God, is to a God whom he hath pleaſed and pacified in our behalf, whoſe Majeſty he hath allayed, whoſe command he hath fulfilled, whoſe threatening he hath ſuſtained, and whoſe wrath he hath endured, and for whoſe loving-kindneſs he hath made a vent; and accordingly it is vented by an audible voice from heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.* Whatever approach now it is that Chriſt makes unto God, as an Advocate at the Father's right-hand, it is in the virtue and value of that engaged approach that I have mentioned; and ſo

ſo it is now to a God whom he hath pleaſed and pacified: and whatever approach we make to God in him, it is to a God reconciled in him, Rom. v. 10. ——Thus you ſee under what conſiderations we are to view the God to whom Chriſt did engage to approach, and, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? ſaith the Lord.*

4thly, In what *ſtation* did he engage to approach unto God? Why,

1. He engaged to approach unto God in the ſtation of a *Surety;* therefore he is called, *The Surety of a better teſtament:* A Surety *for God to us*, that all that he hath promiſed in his word ſhall be made good; for *in him are all the promiſes Yea and Amen*, and he is engaged to ſee them accompliſhed: Alſo as a Surety *for us to God*, having given his hand to his Father, that all our debt ſhould be paid: Chriſt ſays to his Father, in a manner, as Paul ſaid to Philemon concerning Oneſimus, Philem. ver. 18, 19. *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it.*——So ſays Chriſt, Since theſe poor ſinners have wronged thee, O Father, by their ſin, and owe thee an infinite ſum, a debt of obedience and ſatisfaction, *Put it on mine account; I* JESUS *have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it:* I give my bond for it, ſubſcribed with my own hand: *Lo I come to do it; in the volume of thy book it is written of me.* And indeed he is a *Surety* that gets all the debt to pay, and all the duty to perform for the debtor and bankrupt.

2. He engaged to approach to God in the ſtation of a *Mediator*, therefore called, the *Mediator of the new covenant.* He is ſent of God to negociate a peace betwixt God and man; and accordingly *he is our peace*, and travels betwixt the parties in order to their reconciliation. He is a *repairer of breaches*, and a *reſtorer of that which he took not away*, Pſalm xlix. 4. For, as Mediator, he reſtores that glory to God which he took not away; that obedience to the law which he took not away; that holineſs to man which he took not away; that beauty and order to the world which he took

not away; that agreement and concord betwixt heaven and earth, betwixt man and man, which he took not away.

3. He engaged himſelf to approach unto God in the ſtation of an *Ambaſſador*, to ſerve him in that ſtation; and hence he is ſo frequently called the *Sent of God*. Chriſt magnifies his office as being the Sent of God, John iv. 34. *My meat is to do the will of him that ſent me;* and to *finiſh his work*. John v. 40. *I ſeek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath ſent me*. Chriſt magnifies the faith that believes on him as the Sent of God; *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent*. Yea, I have obſerved, that Chriſt is ſpoken of, as the Sent of God, betwixt forty and fifty times in that one goſpel according to John. He is ſent as the Father's Ambaſſador, with the Father's ſeal appended to his commiſſion; *Him hath God the Father ſealed*.

4. He engaged to approach to God in the ſtation of a *mean Servant;* for, *He made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant;* yet, a *faithful* Servant, *faithful in all his houſe;* a Servant according to God's heart; and as righteous as God would have him to be; *By his knowledge ſhall my righteous Servant juſtify many*. A Servant whom God glories in; *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my ſoul delighted*. I might here ſhow you how he engaged to approach to God in the ſtation of a *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King;* a *Witneſs*, *Leader*, and *Commander*, Iſaiah lv. 4. But what I have ſaid, is ſufficient to give us ſome view of the nature of the work he engaged himſelf to, in approaching to God. Therefore I come,

III. To the *third* general head propoſed, which was, To ſpeak of the *ſingularity* of the fact, intimated in the expreſſion, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?* Now, that this was a ſingular engagement, will appear, both from the *matter* and the *manner*.

1*ſt*, Conſider the *matter* of this engagement, and we will ſee the ſingularity of it, eſpecially if we notice the

myſteries

myſteries that ly in the boſom of this engagement; particularly theſe ſix.

1. The *firſt* myſtery in this engagement is, that herein we may ſee the *glory of the eternal God vailed with fleſh*, and dwelling in a tabernacle of clay; *Without controverſy great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh.* To ſee the ſun in the firmament converted to a clod of duſt, or the higheſt ſeraph in heaven to a crawling worm, had been but a ſmall matter, if compared with this; for here we have heaven and earth, time and eternity, finite and infinite together in one perſon.—Here is the *Antient of days* becoming *a young child; To us a Child is born.*—Here is the *everlaſting Fountain of joy* becoming *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief.*—Here is the *greateſt beauty of heaven and earth* with *his viſage marred more than any man and his form than the ſons of men.*—Here is the *Creator of the world*, to whom the earth and its fulneſs belong, yet deſtitute of houſe and hold; *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air neſts, but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head.*

2. The *ſecond* myſtery wrapt up in this engagement, is, that here we may ſee the *glorious Law-giver*, whoſe will is a law to men and angels, *ſubjecting himſelf to his own law*, and that in the room of rebels, that had violated his law, and contemned his authority; for *he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.*

3. The *third* myſtery here to be ſeen, is, that which might make us faint away with wonder and amazement, that the *bleſſed God*, ſhould, in a manner, become a *curſed ſinner*, that curſed ſinners might be bleſſed in him: behold the ever bleſſed God becoming a *curſe*, Gal. iii. 15. And to be *made a curſe*, is a ſtronger word yet than *curſed.*——Behold the ever holy God becoming *ſin*, 2 Cor. v. 21.; and to be *made ſin*, is a ſtronger word yet, than to be a *ſinner.* He became a ſinner by imputation, even *he who knew no ſin, that we might be the righteouſneſs of God in him.* He put his name in our bond, and wrote down himſelf the *ſinner*, that our name

name, might be put in his bond, and we might be righteous through his righteouſneſs. But for the bleſſed God to become a *curſe*, and the holy God to become *ſin*, is more than if all the angels in heaven ſhould become devils. Is there not ſomewhat ſingular here?

4. The *fourth* myſtery wrapt up in this engagement, is, that here we ſee the *Creditor* becoming *Surety for the debtor*, and paying the debt that was owing to himſelf. The eternal Son of God was as much injured by our ſin as the Father was, and yet he engaged to come and ſatisfy his own juſtice.

5. The *fifth* myſtery here involved, is, in this engagement we may ſee the *Judge of all the earth* brought *under condemnation*: condemned by his own Father, whom he never offended; condemned by the law, which he never broke; condemned by ſinners, whom he came to ſave from condemnation; condemned to death, though he be the *Lord of life*, and hath *the keys of hell and death in his hand*, and at his girdle.

6. The *ſixth* myſtery to be ſeen in this engagement, is, that here we may obſerve *juſtice raging againſt the innocent*, and *abſolving the guilty*, and yet without any iniquity or injuſtice; a God of love and a compaſſionate Father forgetting, as it were, his bowels towards his only Son, and taking pleaſure in his death; *For it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*: and yet receiving theſe into his arms and boſom, who had violated his law, and contemned his authority, and grieved his Spirit.—And by this means: here we ſee the *righteouſneſs of the law*, fulfilled in theſe that had *broken the law*, and never obeyed one of its precepts.—Here we may ſee the poor *guilty ſinner*, that ſtands condemned by the law, condemned by juſtice, condemned by conſcience, yet put in caſe to challenge the whole world to *lay any thing to his charge*, Rom. viii. 33.—By this mean alſo we ſee the debt paid and yet pardoned, the guilt of the ſinner puniſhed and yet forgiven.—In a word, there was this ſingular in it, that he engaged to bring the greateſt good out of the greateſt evil. Sin is the greateſt of all evils, and that whereby, of any thing in all the world, God is moſt diſhonoured; and yet there is nothing by

which

which God brings greater glory to himſelf, than by the fall of man: upon theſe ruins *mercy ſhall be built up for ever*, ſays God; and mercy magnified to the higheſt, in a way wherein juſtice is ſatisfied to the uttermoſt; ſin being condemned by a ſacrifice; life bought by a death; and the gates of heaven opened by a croſs. The myſteries contained in this engagement ſhew it to be ſingular.——And thus the matter of the engagement diſcovers the ſingularity of the fact.

2*dly*, Conſider the *manner* of it, and here the *ſingularity* thereof will further appear: how did he engage?

1. He engaged *alone*, he alone; there was none that would or could engage to do this, but himſelf; Iſa. lxiii. 3. *I have trode the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me:* among all the creatures of God, there was none to take part with him in treading the wine-preſs of his Father's wrath: *He ſaw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no interceſſor; therefore his own arm brought ſalvation, and his righteouſneſs it ſuſtained him*, Iſa. lix. 16.

2. He engaged *fully* to do all, to ſuffer all, to purchaſe all, to apply all, and to be All in all; he engaged not only to do, but to *ſuffer*, 1 Pet. iii. 18. *Chriſt hath once ſuffered for ſin, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God:* not only to ſuffer, but to die, and to die for enemies, rebels, and traitors, ſuch as were given him of the Father; and not only to die, but to continue for a time under the power of death; tho' he was life itſelf, and could, in the firſt inſtance of time, have riſen up from the grave that he was laid into.

2. He engaged *freely*; his Father's cauſing him to approach, did not hinder the freedom of his engagement; for, as God, *He and his Father are one*, and have but one divine will; and, as man, his will is ſweetly ſubject to the divine will. He engaged ſo freely, that there was nothing in us, that could move him but miſery; there was none of us could deſire him to do it; he engaged before we had a being: there was none in heaven or earth that could compel him to it; and

and there was nothing that he had to expect from us for his pains; we could never reward him for his work: and all that we ſhall do to eternity, is only, through his grace, to bliſs him for what he hath done.

4. He engaged *firmly*, and that both in point of conſtancy and courage. In point of *courage*; he engaged in the work couragiouſly, though he had juſtice, and wrath, and hell, and heaven, and all on his top; yea, and poor man alſo, for whom he engaged; yet, how couragiouſly did he go through with his work! ſo firmly, as not to be moved with diſcouragements. He went and ſet his face up to Jeruſalem, where he was to be crucified; and you ſee wherewith he encouraged himſelf, Pſal. xvi. 8. compared with Acts ii. 25. *Becauſe the Lord is at my right-hand, I ſhall not be moved:* God's *hand was upon the Man of his right-hand, upon the Son of man whom he made ſtrong for himſelf:* and therefore *the right-hand of the Lord did valiantly: the right-hand of the Lord was exalted; the right-hand of the Lord did valiantly.*—As he engaged firmly in point of courage, ſo alſo in point of *conſtancy*: he never took his word again, but ſtood to the bargain: neither fear of the wrath of his Father, nor ſenſe of the unworthineſs of the ſinner, nor yet the frequent falls and relapſes of his people, could make him alter: he foreſaw all their relapſes into ſin, and into the ſame ſins, yet could it not move him to break the bargain; therefore, *Return ye backſliding children, I will heal your backſlidings*, Jer. iii. 22.; yea, *I will heal your backſliding, and love you freely*, Hoſea xiv. 4. Your inconſtancy, might he ſay, ſhall not make me inconſtant too: he hates putting away, and continues in his love.

5. He engaged *timeouſly* and *ſpeedily*; he did not linger, for the matter could not admit of a delay: when our neck was on the block, and the ax of divine judgment coming down, as it were, to give the fatal ſtroak, he cries ſpeedily, Hold, hold thy hand. What, might God ſay, will you come and be a ſacrifice in their room? No ſooner is the motion made to him, than preſently he was on fire of love to be thus employed and ſubſtitute in our room as a ſacrifice; *Lo I come:*

he

he ſpeaks like one ready to run. When the plague was begun, Moſes commands Aaron to go quickly into the congregation to make an atonement, Num. xvi. 46. The ſentence of divine wrath, which is a terrible plague, was gone out; and therefore Chriſt does ſpeedily engage to make the atonement.

6. He engaged *heartily*; he engaged his *heart* to approach unto God. This being the main particular, with reſpect to the *manner* of the fact, or that branch of the *ſingularity* of it, expreſly mentioned in the text; therefore let us eſpecially take notice of this, *He engaged his heart to approach.—He engaged his heart*; that is, not only did he engage for his *ſoul*, as ſome underſtand it, that his *ſoul ſhould be made an offering for ſin*; but alſo, *he engaged his heart*, that is, he engaged *willingly*; and ſo it was with a thouſand good-wills: Lo I come, Father; thy will is my will.—*He engaged his heart*; that is, he engaged *cordially*, *chearfully*, and *affectionately*; *I delight to do thy will, O my God!* We never read that Chriſt had a ſad heart to quit, for a while, that joy and pleaſure that he had in heaven: Why, what was the matter? You ſee it, Prov. viii. 31.; he had ſo much pleaſure and ſatisfaction in the work he was engaged in, that it is ſaid, *His delights were with the ſons of men, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth*, even the places where his ſick patients lay. It was not for any pleaſure that he took in *habitable places*; nay, it was not *places*, but *perſons* in ſuch and ſuch a place: ſome of my ſick patients ly in this corner of the world, and ſome of them in that corner; ſome of them ly among the iſles, and uttermoſt parts of the earth; ſome of them ly in yonder iſle of Britain, ſome of them in Scotland; and, may not I ſay, ſome of them ly in Fife, and ſome of them in Dunfermline? He rejoiced in the habitable places of the earth, where he had patients to heal; *His delights were with the ſons of men*: For his heart was engaged in his work, he heartily conſented to it from all eternity. And though eternity cannot be divided into parts, yet, to ſpeak after the manner of our conception, he ſpent the reſt of that eternity in rejoicing in the thoughts of it.

But more particularly, that his heart was engaged, will appear, if you conſider,

(1.) That not only did he give his *hearty conſent* from all eternity, but ſo ſoon as ever he had created the world by his almighty arm, then preſently he falls about his work and buſineſs: for he was *ſlain from the foundation of the world.* It is true, he came not perſonally for the ſpace of about four thouſand years from the beginning of the world: but though he came not in *perſon*, yet he came by *proxy*: The infinite wiſdom of God thought fit to order matters ſo, that many a ſacrifice was ſent to be a ſhadow of this good thing that was to come; and many a ſervant did he ſend to aſſure them that he was a-coming.

(2.) When the *fulneſs of time was come*, that he appeared on the ſtage of the earth, he ſhewed, in the whole courſe of his life, how much his *heart* was engaged in his *mediatorial work.* When he was yet a child, and his parents loſt him, and found him in the temple, and began to chide with him; What, ſays Chriſt? Luke ii. 49. *How was it that you ſought me? wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Father's buſineſs?* Never did a hungry man delight more in meat, than Chriſt delighted in the work of our redemption: *It was his meat and drink to do the will of him that ſent him.*

(3.) That his heart was engaged in the work appears from his *zeal* againſt every thing that had a tendency to hinder his going on to the hardeſt and higheſt part of his work. What can be more expreſſive of a heart engaged in the work, than the paſſage you have, Matt. xvi. 23. There Peter began to rebuke Chriſt, when he ſpake of his ſufferings; *Be it far from thee, Lord.* One would think, that Chriſt would have taken this in good part, and that it was love in Peter: but we never read that Chriſt took any thing ſo ill: he turned about, like a man in the greateſt paſſion, and ſays, *Get thee behind me, Satan:* Never was ſuch a word heard from the mouth of Chriſt, and that ſpoken to a ſaint. It is Peter's voice, but the devil hath tuned it; What would become of an elect world, if I ſhould ſtop here?

here? *Get thee behind me, Satan.* His heart was engaged to the work.

(4.) It appears from his *longing to pay the debt* which he had engaged to pay: *I have a baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitened until it be finiſhed?* He longed to be plunged over head and ears, as it were, in the ocean of divine wrath: and when it came near to the time of his death, it is noted, Luke ix. 18. *He went before aſcending up to Jeruſalem;* as a child, that is going with his friends to a place where he deſires to be, runs out before, as being fond to be forward; ſo Chriſt went before, and all the way talked of it to them, as we uſe to talk of what we pant after: Yea, when it came near to his ſuffering, he cannot forbear telling his diſciples, that *with deſire he deſired to eat that paſſover*, wherein he ſaw, as in a glaſs, how he was to ſuffer. And when Judas went forth to betray him, he ſaid, *What thou doeſt, do quickly*, John xiii. 37.; and when he was gone, he rejoiced, and ſaid, *Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him:* He reckoned the work done, becauſe the inſtrument that ſet all a-work was gone out. And, at the end of the 14th chapter of John, he brake off, as it were, in the midſt of the ſermon, and ſays, *Ariſe, let us go hence.* Of all works, preaching was moſt pleaſant to him; but behold he breaks off, and goes out, that he might be taken and crucified, that the occaſion might not ſlip. And then he does not ſtay till Judas found him out; No, he goes forth to the place where Judas and his band were, and offered himſelf a willing ſacrifice. When they ſaid, *We ſeek Jeſus of Nazareth:* he anſwers, *I am he*, John xviii. 4, 5.: and when Peter would have reſcued him, he bade him put up his ſword, ſaying, *The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, ſhall I not drink it?* Yea, when he was beaten and buffeted, how did he *give his back to the ſmiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair? He was led as a lamb to the ſlaughter: and as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth.* Yea, when hanging on a croſs, he had enough to provoke ſo great

a ſpirit to have reſcued himſelf, when they cried, *Come down, and we will believe thee: If thou canſt ſave thyſelf, we will believe that thou canſt ſave others:* Nay, ſay they, *he ſaved others, but himſelf he cannot ſave.* He might, like a Sampſon, have broken down the pillars of heaven and earth about their ears; but he bears all patiently. And then, how his heart was engaged, appears in the very laſt act; *He bowed his head,* and cried out with a joyful heart, *It is finiſhed:* the work which my Father gave me to do, is finiſhed; the work which I engaged my heart unto, is finiſhed: *And ſo he gave up the ghoſt,* committing his ſpirit into his Father's hand as a pledge and token that the engagement was fulfilled.——And now, this work being accompliſhed, ſhall we not think that his heart is as much engaged to the work of redemption by *power*, as it was to the work of redemption by *price?* Yea, *He hath entered into heaven, now to appear in the preſence of God for us*, Heb. ix. 24. *If, when we were yet enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; how much more, being reconciled, ſhall we be ſaved by his life?* Rom. v. 10. *He that was dead is alive, and lives for evermore;* and *he ever lives to make interceſſion for us.* He lives to apply, by the power of his Spirit, what he purchaſed by the price of his blood.——Thus you ſee the *ſingularity of the fact*, both to the matter and manner of it; and how his heart was engaged to approach unto God: And ſo far is he from being diſſatisfied with the bargain, that never a repenting thought was in his heart to this day, with reſpect to the whole of his work.

IV. The *fourth* thing propoſed, was, To give the *reaſons* of the doctrine, why Chriſt did ſo *heartily* come under the engagement; together with the reaſons of our *faith* about it; or, why is it that Jehovah's teſtimony is added in theſe words, *ſaith the Lord: Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?* SAITH THE LORD.

Now, as to the *firſt* of theſe, *viz.* the *reaſon* why Chriſt

Chriſt did ſo *cordially engage* in this work. There are theſe *four* reaſons eſpecially that I would offer.

1. He engaged his heart, from *obedience* to his *Father's command; I delight to do thy will, O my God.* God the Father chooſed him to this ſervice; *Behold my Servant, whom I have choſen; mine Elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth.* And he authorized him in it, and cauſed him to approach: *This commandment have I received of my Father.*

2. He engaged his heart from *zeal* to his *Father's glory.* Though the whole creation of men and angels had been offered up as a whole burnt-offering, it would not have repaired the honour of God for one ſin whereby his honour is impaired: But Chriſt's engagement is what brings more glory to God, than if all mankind had ſtood, or yet fallen a ſacrifice to divine juſtice; therefore Chriſt, from a zeal to his Father's glory, did come under this engagement; *The zeal of God's houſe did eat him up.* By his engagement all the *attributes of God* are glorified.——God had a mind to ſet out his *love* and *mercy* to the utmoſt, and herein it is done more than any other way; *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life,* John iii. 16. We may behold here the height and depth, the length and breadth of the love of God, in taking his Son out of his boſom, where he lay from eternity, and giving him for us. He looked over all the copies of his love, grace, and mercy that he had written in all his former works, and found them ſhort of the thing; therefore it is his will to write his love in letters of blood, upon him who is an infinite Spirit with himſelf: and, that this may be done, he gives him a body; *A body haſt thou given me,* that this body, this human nature, might be a ſacrifice for ſin.—God had a mind to ſet forth the glory of his *juſtice* to the utmoſt, and by this engagement it is done. What though the whole world were drowned in a deluge of water, or, as Sodom, burnt to aſhes! What though all the poſterity of Adam were doomed to everlaſting burning? What though every ſpire of graſs, or atom

of

of duſt, were a rational creature, and for ſin thrown into hell: This would be indeed an act of excellent juſtice: but what is all this to the juſtice execute upon Chriſt, when he ſtood in our room? What are all other judgments to his bloody ſweat in the garden, and his expiring groans upon a croſs? Here is the higheſt act of juſtice imaginable, to make the ſoul of his dearly beloved Son an offering for ſin, when imputed to him. See Romans iii. 23. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God.* Here the awakened ſword of juſtice is drunk to full and complete ſatisfaction with the moſt noble blood that ever was or could be.—God had a mind to ſet forth his *holineſs* to the utmoſt: now the perfect obedience of men and angels might ſet forth his holineſs; but what is all this to the obedience of the Son of God, whoſe obedience does indeed magnify the law? God's law was never honoured, and his holineſs never ſhewed with ſuch a ſparkling luſtre.—God had a mind to ſet forth his *power* to the utmoſt; and now the arm of omnipotency was not ſo much manifeſted in laying the foundation of the earth, and ſtretching out the heavens as a curtain, and turning the wheels of providence, as in bringing about the ſalvation of ſinners by Chriſt; the power of God ſupporting Chriſt under that load of wrath, which would have cruſhed ten thouſand worlds: *Once have I heard, yea twice, that power belongeth unto the Lord*, Pſalm lxii. 11.—Once have I heard it in the work of creation and providence, but far more gloriouſly in the work of redemption, wherein he ſpoiled principalities and powers, bruiſed the head of the ſerpent, deſtroyed the works of the devil, diſarmed death, and knocked off the fetters of our ſpiritual captivity.—In a word, God had a mind to ſet forth his *wiſdom* to the utmoſt. Wiſdom ſhines every moment in the work of creation, it glitters every day in the work of providence; but *all the treaſures of wiſdom are hid in Chriſt.* Here is the wiſdom of God in a myſtery; *the manifold wiſdom of God;* particularly in uniting the moſt divine extremes: the di-

vine

vine and human natures are united in one perſon; the juſtice and mercy of God united in one joint harmony, for the ſalvation of ſinners, without robbing each other of their right, and ſo God and man united in an eternal fellowſhip; ſtubble is made to dwell with devouring fire, without being deſtroyed; and weakneſs to behold glory, without being overwhelmed; yea, ſtraw is made to dwell with everlaſting burnings; *Who among us ſhall dwell with devouring fire? who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* Iſa. xxxiii. 14. Why, even the believer can dwell with a God of terrible majeſty and infinite juſtice, and dwell there with ſatisfaction, and without hazard of being conſumed, becauſe of this engagement of Chriſt, whereby juſtice is infinitely ſatisfied.——Thus, I ſay, God had a mind to ſet forth the glory of his perfections: now, zeal for this glory of God engaged the Mediator's heart to this work.

3. He engaged his heart, from a view of his Father's *reward: For the joy that was ſet before him, he endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame*, Heb. xii. 2. *and now is ſet down at the right-hand of God*, Heb. ii. 9. His Father promiſed him, that, having *drunk of the brook in the way*, he then ſhould *lift up his head;* and accordingly, he *having humbled himſelf, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs*, therefore *God hath highly exalted him*, Phil. ii. 8, 9. In a word, it was the Father's promiſe to him, that, upon his *making his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhould ſee his ſeed, and ſee the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied.* And therefore his heart was engaged to the work.

4. He engaged his heart to this work; why! It was even out of *love* and *pity to loſt ſinners:* he ſaw us helpleſs and hopeleſs, and lying in our blood; and then our time was a time of love. Chriſt was drawn to this work; but what was it that drew him? even a cord of love: Love brought him out of heaven, and love nailed him to a croſs, and love laid him in a grave, and love made him riſe again, and mount up to heaven to agent our cauſe. On what deſign came he to the world? It was a deſign of love. What ſickneſs died he

he of? he was even ſick of love, and died in love. O! ſhall not this love beget love, and engage our hearts to him, whoſe heart was engaged to this work out of love to us? In a word, it was to engage the hearts of ſinners to him, and ſo to make way for their approaching unto God in him.

2*dly*, As to the *reaſon* of *our faith*, in the laſt word of the text; it is built upon a *Thus ſaith the Lord; Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?* SAITH THE LORD. There is JEHOVAH's teſtimony; and why is this added? Why?

1. Becauſe nothing is more *quieting to the conſcience* of a ſinner than the teſtimony of a God concerning a Saviour; God, by his holy Spirit in the word, teſtifying of Chriſt to the conſcience, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.* True peace of conſcience is grounded upon this teſtimony.

2. Nothing is more *ſecuring to the ſoul;* for God's teſtimony is our ſecurity; Pſal. xix. 7. *The teſtimony of the Lord is ſure.* It is *very ſure*, Pſal. xciii. 5. Here is ground for the aſſurance of faith; the ſure word and teſtimony of a God that cannot lie.

3. Nothing is more *rejoicing to the heart*, Pſal. xix. 8. and Pſal. lx. 9. *God hath ſpoken in his holineſs, I will rejoice:* Why? nothing ſpeaks out more love than this, when JEHOVAH ſays the word, as well as does the work. The ſoul cannot but rejoice when the Lord ſpeaks to it; at leaſt, here is ground of joy unſpeakable; John xv. 11. *Theſe things have I ſpoken to you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

4. Nothing is more *ſilencing to unbelief* than this: why? here is the very utmoſt length that unbelief can go; for, ſays the unbelieving heart, if God would ſay it, then I would believe it. Well, *Thus ſaith the Lord* comes in here, to ruin and ſilence your unbelief. Here is the reaſon of our faith: for you are to notice two things in the text; the one is, the glorious *object* of faith, a Chriſt engaging himſelf in our room: The other is the convincing *reaſon* of faith; it comes with a *Thus ſaith the Lord.* Now, in order to get our faith fixed, and brought to a full aſſurance and certainty, we

are

are not ſo much to look to the *object* of faith, or the thing to be believed, as to the *reaſon* of faith, and the ground of it, namely, God's teſtimony; he ſays it: his truth and veracity is at the ſtake to give us ſecurity; it is the great word of the great God. It is not the greatneſs of a promiſe that draws our faith, but the fidelity of the promiſer; nay, the greater the promiſe is, the more will we doubt of it, unleſs there be a ground for believing it. If a man of undoubted integrity come and tell you never ſo great things that he is to do for you, and give to you, the greatneſs of the things promiſed is not the reaſon of your believing him; nay, the greater they are, the further will you be from believing: but the reaſon of your believing is, becauſe the man is honeſt and able, and a perſon of intire credit, whom you can truſt. Even ſo it is here; there is a great thing propoſed to our faith, that Chriſt, the *Sent of God*, is engaged for our complete ſalvation; and upon this ground he promiſes in the context, *I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people.* But, the greater it is, the further are we from believing it; and therefore we muſt have a reaſon for our faith: well, it is here, the God of truth ſays it, and we are to take it upon the teſtimony of the God that cannot lie. When Abraham was *ſtrong in the faith*, and *againſt hope believed in hope*, was it the greatneſs of the promiſe that ſupported his faith, or the reaſonableneſs of it! No, no; his body and Sarah's both were dead: but he conſidered the veracity and ability of the God that promiſed; *He was fully perſwaded that he that had promiſed was able to perform*, Rom. iv. 21. When Moſes was ſent to Iſrael in Egypt, to tell them that the ſet time was come that they were to be delivered from their Egyptian thraldom and bondage, and to be brought to a land flowing with milk and honey: here is a great promiſe: but O, ſays Moſes, how will they believe this? Why, ſays God, *Go tell them* I AM *hath ſent you*, even the God of *beings*, that can give being to what I ſay. I was known to their forefathers by the name, *Lord God Almighty;* becauſe I did mightily for them, to wit, Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob: and now I

am come to accompliſh my promiſe that I made to them concerning their ſeed; therefore I will be known now to them by the name, I AM THAT I AM. I have all Beings in myſelf from eternity, and can give a being to my promiſe. Here is a good ground for their faith. If we look not to this ground, the greatneſs of the promiſe will overſet our faith, while the man ſays, O! it is too good news to be true? It is too great for me! and ſo we reaſon ourſelves out of our faith: But, O! ſee who ſays it, and that it is the word of JEHOVAH, and here is firm footing for your faith.

V. The *fifth* thing propoſed, was the *application* of this doctrine, in ſome *inferences*. Is it ſo, that Chriſt, the eternal Son of God, did thus cordially engage himſelf to approach unto God in the work and buſineſs of our redemption! Then hence we may infer the following particulars: We may ſee,

1. The greatneſs of our *ruin by nature*, and the ſad caſe that mankind is in; that not one of all the poſterity of Adam can or dare approach unto God, or come under engagements for this end. If we do, we engage ourſelves to what is impoſſible to perform, and we approach to a fiery tribunal, where we are doomed to eternal death, unleſs we come under the wings of this glorious Engager and Approacher to God. This God will ſhew no regard to any perſonal bond or engagement of ours: for our perſonal credit is cracked and broken, not only originally in Adam, by the violation of the covenant of works, but actually in our own perſons: we never kept a word that we promiſed to God; we never kept our engagements to God one day to an end: and therefore God will not truſt us. I am far from diſallowing of *perſonal covenanting* and engaging, when it is put in its due place; that is, after a man hath once cloſed with Chriſt, as the principal Engager; and then vows, through his grace, and under the covert of his engagement, from gratitude, to ſerve the Lord, and walk in his ways: but for all other kinds of engagements, let us know, that God will take none of our bonds without a cautioner. And we are blind if we

we do not ſee that our credit is cracked: look to our national engagements; our COVENANTS, NATIONAL and SOLEMN LEAGUE; and ſure our *national* credit is cracked and broken: never a nation was more ſolemnly engaged to God, and yet never any national engagement was more ſolemnly broken and buried; the credit of our miniſters and people, of our nation and church, are ſunk into the depth of defection, diviſion, error, ſecurity, and carnal compliances. And whereas our forefathers tranſmitted to us their poſterity, precious truths, and pure Confeſſions of Faith, worthy of the name of Reformers; how are we like to tranſmit to our poſterity a world of traſh and lumber, inſtead of precious treaſure? while, among other things, *old Reformation-principles* and *doctrines* are like to be carried down to ſucceeding generations after us, under the taſh of *wildneſs*, *new ſchemes*, and *Antinomian-cant* *. And

* This affair may be ſeen cleared up, Vol. I. Ser. IV. p. 238. Ser. XX. p. 175 the whole of Ser. XXIII,-- XXVII. particularly p. 304, 305. Although among the many peculiarly important and ſingularly intereſting doctrines of Chriſtianity there is ſcarce any that hath a greater tendency to promote holineſs, than the believer's being freed from the law as a covenant, in point of juſtification, in virtue of the meritorious obedience of Chriſt in his room; yet, in regard this doctrine is eminently calculated to advance the glory of God, in the manifeſtation of the freedom of his grace and to debaſe the creature, in levelling pride and ſelf confidence, there is hardly any that is more ſpurned at than this, in the age we live in, and by none more than the ſelf-ſufficient Legaliſt, who prides himſelf in, and vaunts mightily of his legal righteouſneſs: and ſo ſpeaks, writes, and reaſons againſt the Scripture-doctrine of free juſtification through the merits of Chriſt: yea, ſo much is he in conceit with his legal turn of mind, and external conformity to the law, that he ſticks at nothing that he thinks will bring a reproach upon his opponents; and therefore, let their abilities be never ſo great, and their character never ſo high, he is determined to calumniate their name, and depreciate their reputation: for this purpoſe he heſitates at nothing he imagines will gain his end: and hence we find, that introducers of new ſchemes in Divinity, diſturbers of the peace of the church, enemies to holineſs, friends to licentiouſneſs, advancers of Antinomianiſm, and what not, are the uſual epithets and appellations we meet with conferred upon them. But what period of the church produced more eminent divines, greater lovers of our Reformation-principles, truer patrons of genuine piety, more ſhining examples of true holineſs, greater promoters of external purity, and ſtronger oppoſers of licentiouſneſs, than the friends to the Marrow doctrine, of *dying to the law, in point of juſtification, in order to living unto God in point of ſanctification* were, who were, and ſtill are thus impeached?—But they being fully perſuaded, that this

as we ought to be humbled this day for the breach of our *National Covenant* and *Solemn League*; ſo we may ſee what is neceſſary, in order to the reviving of a covenanted Work of Reformation, and of our Solemn Engagements, even that the generation be brought to acquaintance with Chriſt, as the firſt and foremoſt Engager in their room; and then, that, under the acceptable covert of his engagement, they come under obligations, through his grace to approach unto God, by returning to him and to their duty. O that the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt, were poured out for this end! However, as our national engagements are ſadly broken, ſo look to your baptiſmal engagements, your communion engagements, and all your other particular engagements to duty; and ſee, that as our national, ſo our perſonal credit is cracked; for an evil heart of unbelief cauſes your departure from the living God, every hour of the day. And this is ſuch an univerſal diſeaſe, that there is not one of Adam's race that God can now truſt without a cautioner, nor allow to approach to him without a mids-man.

2. Hence ſee the *glorious excellency of Chriſt*, and the *ſufficiency* of this *wonderful Engager* for his people, in that he was able to approach to an offended God, and able to ſtand there in the ſinner's ſtead, and to plead for their good; able to ſtand the trial of infinite holineſs and impartial juſtice, and, where nothing was to be forgiven, was able to ſatisfy all that the law and juſtice could demand, and to finiſh every thing that was neceſſary to be done, in reference to man's ſalvation, and the work of redemption. O ſee his glory, ſee his glory! O glorious Engager, glorious Approacher! Behold his glory, and the glory of God in him! If you ſee any thing of this glory to captivate you, then the *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in your hearts, to give you the light*

this is a doctrine agreeable to the inſpired Writings, and peculiarly calculated to promote holineſs, [Gal. ii. 19. Titus ii. 11, 12.] they bore all this unjuſt calumny and defamation patiently, accounting it their greateſt honour to ſuffer reproach for the truth's ſake.

light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.

3. Hence ſee what is the *goſpel-way of a ſinner's engaging to duty*, and *approaching to God:* Why, it is juſt to take on with this Engager, and ſo to engage under him; and to take on with this bleſſed Approacher, and to approach to God in him. In the old covenant of works, man got a ſtock of created grace in his own hand; and if he miſpent his ſtock, and became bankrupt, he was to anſwer for himſelf; he had no ſurety or cautioner to ſtand up for him, or to pay his debt, or to approach to God for him: but the covenant of grace is better ordered than ſo, and therefore called *a better teſtament*, whereof Chriſt is the Mediator, in whoſe hand the principal ſtock is; and whatever ſmall meaſure of grace believers have beſtowed upon them, yet their ſtock can never be ſpent, and they can never break, or become liable to a law-purſuit, for the Cautioner keeps them and their ſtock both; and he being the Engager, they may engage to do any thing, yea, all things, upon this ſcore; *I can do all things, through Chriſt ſtrengthening me:* and he being the leading Approacher to God, they may approach to God with boldneſs, when he goes before them; *We have boldneſs to enter into the holieſt, by the blood of Jeſus.* Here then is a teſt of right engagements; you cannot be truſted if you engage alone; you muſt match with one that can make good your engagements. In your common affairs in the world, you know that no man will take a perſon's bond or engagement for a ſum of money; for example, if he know the perſon to be inſolvent, that can never make payment, but rather is always taking on more and more debt; but if that perſon, be he never ſo poor himſelf, will provide you a ſufficient cautioner, that will give his bond of ſuretiſhip for him, then you will accept of the perſon's bond under this cautionry; becauſe, though the principal, whom you have good ground to ſuſpect, ſhould break the next hour, and become utterly inſolvent, yet you are ſecure, becauſe you can purſue the cautioner when you will, upon his engagement and bond of ſuretiſhip.

Well,

Well, juſt ſo is it here; poor broken bankrupt that thou art, there is no truſting of thy bond or engagement; God will not truſt any of the race of Adam; ſince the time that he brake, when he violate his firſt covenant-engagement. Nay, the Lord knows, you are ſo far from being able to pay your debt, that you are but every moment taking on more and more; but, be you never ſo poor and inſolvent, if you once accept Chriſt for your Cautioner, then God will accept of any bond off your hand, that hath his name as the Engager in it; for, if you fail, your Cautioner is liable, and he is a rich and opulent Cautioner, ſponſable enough; and God ſeeks no better than his bond, though you be never ſo unable to pay: yea, God reckons himſelf ſecure, and that all ſhall be well enough paid, when Chriſt is the Cautioner and Engager, accepted by you. He is ſecured of his honour; obedience to his law is ſecured, ſatisfaction to his juſtice is ſecured, glory to all his attributes is ſecured: and herein lies the triumph of faith, over all charges and challenges from the law or juſtice of God, Rom. viii. 33, 34. What is the charge? Why, ſays the law, you owe me a debt of obedience; yea, ſays juſtice, and you owe me a debt of ſatisfaction, becauſe of your diſobedience: nay, but ſays bold faith, you may produce what charges you will, but there is a diſcharge to counterbalance it. If you had my ſingle perſonal bond for payment, then I confeſs I would be liable; but as I can elide any law-purſuit againſt me, with the defence of my Cautioner's full payment in my room, ſo if you have any thing further to ſay againſt me, go to my Cautioner, who is engaged for all: he is able to anſwer all that you can ſay: and therefore let all challengers and him reckon the matter betwixt them.——In a word, right engagement is to engage upon Chriſt's engagement.—— What is that? It is juſt, as it were, to lay a wager upon Chriſt's head. I will wager upon his head, that I will get to heaven, in ſpite of all the devil's in hell; I will wager upon his head, that the head of the ſerpent ſhall be bruiſed; I will wager upon his head, that ſin ſhall not have dominion over me; I will wager upon

pon his head, that I ſhall perform duty, and do all things through him ſtrengthening me; I will wager upon his head, that my ſins ſhall be forgiven me; as the Jews, you know, confeſſed their ſins upon the head of the ſacrifice ſhadowing Chriſt; and what was the goſpel of it? Why, when it was done in the faith of Chriſt, the great ſacrifice, it was in effect to ſay, I will wager upon the head of this ſacrifice, that as it is ſufficient for the expiation of my ſins, ſo all my ſins ſhall be pardoned upon this ground. What ſay you, man? Will you venture all that concerns your holineſs and happineſs, grace and glory, duty and dignity; will you venture all upon Chriſt? Will you wager and engage upon his head? Then in God's name you ſhall gain the day. But here alſo is a teſt of right approaching to God in all duties and ordinances, and at a communion-table; why, it is juſt, as it were, a coming to the chamber of divine preſence, ſo as to come in at Chriſt's back, ſetting him before you as the firſt Approacher to uſher you in; *I am the way, and no man cometh to the Father but by me.* It is to come to God in the faith of Chriſt's having approached to him before you, and to come boldly, never fearing that his infinite holineſs ſhall daſh ſuch a filthy ſinner, nor that his infinite juſtice ſhall confound ſuch a guilty ſinner. Why, your Uſher, that hath gone before you to the preſence of this holy and juſt God, hath gratified his holineſs, and ſatisfied his juſtice both.——Here, I ſay, you ſee the right engaging and right approaching.

4. And laſtly, Paſſing all other inferences that might be drawn from the doctrine; hence ſee the *duty* of all that *hear this goſpel*, and what the Lord is *calling you to this day*: it is even this, that your heart be engaged to approach unto him, whoſe heart was engaged to approach unto God in your room; that ſo, approaching heartily to Chriſt, you may approach confidently to God in him; for there is no approaching to God but by taking Chriſt by the way. O then, let your hearts be engaged to approach unto Chriſt; this is the very deſign of all that we have been ſaying, even to engage your hearts to the Son of God. And, O

Sirs

Sirs, what in all the world will engage your hearts, if the engaged heart of Chriſt do it not? He is come here this day to court your hearts; the very heart of a Saviour is come down to court the heart of a ſinner, and to court you with this argument, That his heart is ſo much upon you, that he engaged his heart to approach unto God in your room. Away with the devil's logic, *May be it was not for me that Chriſt engaged, nor for me that he approached unto God; for there is but a ſelect number, that were elected from eternity, for whom he engaged and approached.* In order to ſhut this objection out of the way, let me tell you, man, that *ſecret things belong to God, but to us the things that are revealed.* Let an infinitely wiſe God anſwer for his own decrees, as well as he can; but you dare not be anſwerable to God for meddling with them; and you meddle too far, if the thoughts thereof diſcourage you from coming to Chriſt this day. Will it be a good anſwer for you, before the bar of God? Lord, I thought, perhaps, I was not elected, and therefore my heart could never be engaged to Chriſt. What anſwer can you expect from God, but the like of this, Wretch that thou art, had you not my revealed will to be a rule of your duty? And did not I reveal, That upon the peril of damnation you was to cloſe with my Chriſt? And what had you to do with my ſecret decree? How durſt you attempt to be wiſe above what is written? Who but the devil could ſuggeſt that to your heart, that you was not an elect? And he was a liar for ſaying ſo, for he told you what he did not know himſelf. How does the devil act herein like himſelf, while he would carry you up to the pinnacle of the temple of eternal predeſtination at the firſt inſtant, that you may thence throw yourſelf down from the battlement of heaven to the bottom of hell, which was the way himſelf went, and he would have you along with him? O! will you regard the ruining ſuggeſtions of a black devil, more than the kindly motions of a Saviour? O! will you rather utſhoot the devil in his own bow, and draw an argument for faith from what was done from all eternity? Titus i. 2. Was eternal life promiſed

miſed in Chriſt before the world began? was all engaged for from eternity? Then there is the leſs ado for me, when this promiſe of eternal life comes directed and offered; for, *to you is the word of this ſalvation ſent*, that Chriſt hath engaged for all that concerns our ſalvation; and we have nothing ado, but, through grace, to conſent that this Engager be ours, to do all for us. From all eternity the Mediator's heart was engaged to the work of our redemption; and from this infinitely high and eternal tower there are ropes of divine promiſes hanging down, for us to lay hold on with our hearts: For *the promiſe is to us and to our children, and to all that are afar off.* And when our hearts embrace any of theſe promiſes that are faſtened to Chriſt's engaged heart, then our hearts are carried up in God's order to the knowledge of the divine counſels, and go up the ſcripture-ſtair; while Satan would have us begin at the top, that we may fall down head-long. Now, among theſe promiſes that are let down from Chriſt's engaged heart, for us to embrace with our heart, there is one, Jer. xxxi. 2. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love, therefore with loving-kindneſs will I draw thee.* O Sirs, here is a cord of love let down, and the upper end of it is faſtened to Chriſt's heart, and the lower end of it hanging down the length of your hearts: And, O! ſhall not Chriſt's heart and yours be knit together this day? here is a cord to bind his heart to your heart, and your heart to his heart. O! ſtrong cord of God's making! O! ſhall not the Saviour's heart and the ſinner's heart meet together this day? Will the heart of Jeſus gain no heart in this houſe to-day? Yea, we hope there ſhall be a meeting of hearts betwixt him and a remnant here. O then, ſinner, come into his heart, for his heart is open; and I have a commiſſion to tell you, that his heart is open to you, and opened ſo wide, that you may all go in to his opened heart.——It is not a hard heart like yours: No, no: If he had been as hardened againſt you, as your hearts were hardened againſt him, he would never have engaged ſo heartily to approach to God for you, nor ever ſent us to tell

you his heart's love towards you. O believe it upon his word, Jerem. xxxi. 20. He is not hard-hearted; no; his heart is a melting heart, ſaying, *I do earneſtly remember you ſtill; my bowels are troubled for you; I will ſurely have mercy upon you.* From the very time that I engaged for you, which was from all eternity, I do earneſtly remember you ſtill; and now the time of love is come, the time of letting out my heart toward you: my bowels are ſounding for you, and my heart is melting over you, and warm drops of love are falling down from my melted heart to your hard hearts, that they may be melted and diſſolved, ſo as both mine and yours may be melted into one, and being run together with the fire of my everlaſting love, they may be engaged to each other for ever. O Sinner! ſinner! ſinner! O enemies! enemies to God, enemies to Jeſus! O hard-hearted ſinner! Words and rods, calls and threatenings, ſermons and ſacraments have not melted your heart; and if you go to hell, the flames of hell will never melt your heart: but here are the flames of infinite love from the heart of a God-man; what will this do? A God of love is come down, and muſt not the mountains melt before him? Yea, mountains of enmity and unbelief, and the hard flinty heart will melt like wax before him. A live coal from the flaming altar of Chriſt's engaged heart, is come down to put fire to your cold-rife heart. O! is the bleſſed fire kindled? Is your heart engaged to him or not? If not, will you conſider,

(1.) What a *ſad thing* it is, if your heart ſhall not be engaged to approach unto him: It ſays, the heart is engaged to ſome others than to Chriſt, that your heart is engaged to idols and luſts, and you cannot find in your heart to ſign a bill of divorce from theſe.—But, O! will you tell me, if your heart be engaged to the devil, engaged to the world, engaged to the fleſh, and the luſts thereof, engaged to wicked company, engaged to corrupt courſes, and that you cannot be diſengaged from them, nor break theſe engagements, nor your covenant with hell? O! will any of theſe lovers to whom your hearts are engaged, will any of

of them engage to approach to God in your room, as Chriſt hath done? Will any of them engage to bring you to heaven, or to keep you out of hell? Nay, are they not engaged rather to ruin your ſouls for ever, if they can? And why ſhould your hearts be engaged to your greateſt enemies, that would lead you to deſtruction; and not engaged to Chriſt, who engaged his heart to approach unto God for your ſalvation and redemption? If your hearts be not engaged to Chriſt, it ſays you are, at beſt, married and engaged to the law; you are going about to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of your own; hoping to pleaſe God, and procure ſalvation to yourſelves by your prayers and good duties: Your language is like that of the wicked ſervant, that ſaid, *Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.* You are not yet pleaſed to have one to undertake for all in in your room; and therefore, O ſad is your ſtate! for you ſtand under a perſonal obligation to pay all indeed: You are *a debtor to do the whole law;* and yet, becauſe of your failure, you are under obligation to bear the whole curſe of the law. O terrible! If you ſtay there, you muſt approach to the tribunal of God, in your own perſon. O! how will you approach to God without him! You will find God out of Chriſt a conſuming fire.

(2.) Conſider how *ſweet* it is to have your hearts engaged to him, whoſe heart was engaged to approach to God for you: his heart was engaged to you before ever yours were engaged to him; yea, from all eternity; and you may *rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* Though your debt be never ſo great, he is engaged to pay it; though your ſins be never ſo heinous, he is engaged to pardon them; though your corruptions be never ſo ſtrong, he is engaged to ſubdue them; though your enemies be never ſo mighty, he is engaged to conquer them; and though the promiſes be never ſo precious in themſelves, and unlikely to be accompliſhed to you, yet he is engaged to fulfil them; only, while you are here, on this ſide Jordan, he will accompliſh them in his own time, and in his

own meaſure, and according as your need, your work, and his glory do call for it. Yea, he is engaged to perform all your work, in you and for you, and to perfect ſtrength in your weakneſs: he is engaged to guide you by his counſel, and bring you to his glory, and to lead you ſafe through the valley of the ſhadow of death into IMMANUEL's land: he is engaged for your debt, your duty, your ſafety, and all. O what a load-ſtone is this, to draw the heart and engage the affections of any rational ſoul, to engage with one that engages for all that you can need through time and through eternity! Why, ſay you, But muſt I engage to do nothing? O that old covenant, *Do* and *Live*, ſticks faſt to you: in the covenant of works, man was engaged to do all; but O, in the covenant of grace, Chriſt is engaged to do all. Why, man, if you can do any thing without Chriſt, you may try your hand; but why will you give Chriſt the lie, who ſays, *without me ye can do nothing!* And if that be a truth, O how ſweet is it to have a heart engaged to him, that has engaged to do all! You may know from your experience, how ſad a thing it is to take any engagement upon yourſelf alone, and on your own head: for it never abides a touch; and when you break your engagement, then you are quite diſpirited, as if the covenant of grace were broken; and thus you turn your covenant of duties to God's covenant of grace, and ſo the covenant of grace to a covenant of works; and, in that caſe, no wonder that you find the law a hard and heavy taſk-maſter. But the covenant of grace is Chriſt's engaging to do all; it is not a bargain that God is making with you; for he will not make a bargain with the like of you; God knows you are a bargain-breaker; but it is a bargain made with Chriſt, wherein Chriſt hath engaged to God to do all for you, becauſe you can do nothing: and now he courts your heart to fall in with this device of glorious and free grace.

(3.) Conſider *who* it is that is courting your heart: It is he to whom the heart of God is engaged; *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold: mine Elect, in whom my*

my ſoul delighteth. God's heart was engaged to Chriſt from all eternity, not only becauſe he was his eternal Son, but alſo becauſe he engaged his heart to approach to him on your account. God's heart is ſo much engaged to him for that very reaſon, that he declares three times, with an audible voice from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed;* and all that he ſeeks is that you be well-pleaſed too. And, O you are ill to pleaſe, if that which pleaſes God, will not pleaſe you, and your heart is ill diſpoſed, if it be not engaged to him to whom God's heart is engaged. God the Father put him upon this work, out of good-will to you: he cauſed him to approach on your account; and he is pleaſed with his engagement and approach; and nothing in the world will pleaſe God ſo much, nor make him take ſo much pleaſure in you, as your being well-pleaſed with Chriſt and his undertaking, ſo as to find your heart engaged to him for it; for then you will pleaſe him more than ever your ſins diſpleaſed him; and you will honour him more than ever your ſins diſhonoured him: Yea, then he will get full ſatisfaction for all your ſins; becauſe that glorious Engager, whom you cloſe with, hath fully contented his heart; and ſo you will ſatisfy his juſtice more than your eternal damnation in hell could do.—O! the heart of God is engaged to him, and the hearts of angels are engaged to him, and the hearts of all the redeemed are engaged to him: O! ſhall all hearts be engaged to him but yours! O there would be joy in heaven, and it would be a day of the gladneſs of Chriſt's heart, and it would give a glad heart to God, angels, and ſaints, if your hearts were engaged to Chriſt!

(4.) Conſider *whoſe heart* he is courting: You perhaps think, ſurely it will be ſome very good heart that will pleaſe him: indeed I know none that have a good heart, by nature; and you that think you have a good heart to God, do but deceive yourſelves: But, O he is even courting the love of that heart that is full of enmity againſt him; his love is ſeeking to break your enmity this day. What for a heart have you, man, woman?

woman? Be what ſort of a heart it will, he is ſeeking it; *My Son, give me thy heart.* Is it a wicked heart, and a wandering heart, an unbelieving heart, a deceitful heart? Is it the heart of Manaſſeh in compact with Satan? Is it the heart of Mary Magdalene, out of whom were caſt ſeven devils? Is it the worſt heart in all the world, and the worſt heart that ever was in the world? a hard heart, a ſtout heart, a ſtony heart, a heart full of hell, and a heart like the devil? It is even the heart that he is ſeeking and courting this day: he engages to give you a new heart and a new ſpirit; and if you ſign his engagement with your heart, ſaying, Content, Lord; he will make your heart to his mind by degrees; and your heart ſhall be according to his heart. What, ſay you, is that poſſible, that he is courting ſuch a heart as mine? Would it not be preſumption for ſuch an one as me, vile, filthy, black, and ugly me, to truſt for ſo much good at the hand of ſuch an one as Chriſt? What, man! when God calls, is it preſumption in you to anſwer his call? No; it is the greateſt preſumption in the world to ſit his call, and refuſe his kind embraces, when he offers to take you into his very heart. When Chriſt offered to waſh Peter's feet, O did it not ill become him to ſay, *Lord, thou ſhalt never waſh my feet*, John xiii. 8. Be your feet never ſo dirty, and your heart never ſo black, you have the more need to let Chriſt waſh you.

(5.) Conſider, that the *preſent opportunity* is a *ſpecial ſeaſon* of letting out your heart upon him, when he is coming ſo near to you in this work. It is a dangerous thing to miſs the tide when it is flowing: ſome of your friends and neighbours are in eternity, ſince the laſt communion here; and you may never hear another action-ſermon all your life: and though you may hear other ſermons, yet it is but now and then that the wind blows, and that the Spirit breathes; and it is dangerous to reſiſt the motions that blow you into the happy harbour of Chriſt's engaged heart: if there be a gale of heaven juſt now blowing, yet it may be over before an hour go about. O ſhall not your heart be engaged unto Chriſt! What if death approach to you, and ſnap the

the thread of your life in two? O! you would be more miſerable than the devil to all eternity; for he never had ſuch an offer as this. Death is approaching, judgment is approaching, eternity is approaching, and your heart not approaching to Chriſt: wo is me! what will come of you!

(6.) Conſider, that Chriſt hath *fulfilled his engagement to the Father for you*, by bringing in *everlaſting righteouſneſs*; and God hath accepted it, and is well-pleaſed with it as the condition of the covenant, and all the promiſes thereof: and, upon this account, the promiſe is made to you, as follows immediately upon the text, *I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people.* I WILL and YE SHALL, is the tenor of the promiſe; becauſe Chriſt hath fulfilled the condition of it, ſo as you have nothing to do, but to ſay with the heart, *Thy will be done.* And if your heart be engaged to him, and made willing, the God who commends Chriſt ſo highly to you, in the words of the text, will turn it over to your commendation, ſaying, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, ſaith the Lord?* Now, ſay not, that you want ſuch and ſuch qualifications and conditions requiſite in theſe that give their heart and hand to the Son of God: if your heart ſtand off from him on this account, it argues a heart in league with the law as a covenant of works, which is but a black bargain now, for any of the fallen race of Adam; but the better teſtament is a better bargain, where Chriſt hath engaged for all fully, and you are only to take all freely: and never a good qualification will you have acceptable to God, till your heart be engaged to him whoſe heart was engaged to give all. If your heart be not thus engaged to Chriſt, to be obliged and indebted to him for all, then, though you had a thouſand times more qualifications than you would be at, yet you ſhall go to hell with them, and periſh eternally: and if your heart be once engaged to Chriſt, then, though you had ten thouſand good qualifications, you will *count them all but dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt*, as Paul did. It is ſaid of the creditor, concerning his two debtors,

Luke

Luke vii. 42. *When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them all.* So long as you think you have ſomething to pay your own debt, or hope that you ſhall have ſomething to make payment with, you are not in God's way of forgiveneſs; but when you have nothing to pay; not a penny in your purſe, either to pay your debt of obedience and ſatisfaction to the law, as a covenant; or your debt of duty to the law, as a rule, and are content to take a cautioner, then he frankly forgives all. And ſo the beſt qualification is for you to ſee that you have nothing; no money nor money-worth, that you may be obliged to Chriſt for all.

What ſay you, man? Is your heart engaged to him? I think ſo, may ſome ſay; but it may be only a flaſh, becauſe I have a deceitful heart. Why, man, be your heart never ſo deceitful, yet if there be ſuch a heart-warming in your breaſt, as makes you ſubſcribe to his engagement to do all for you, and to make you *holy* as well as *happy*, and to free you from ſin as well as hell; if it be ſuch as makes you come out of yourſelf, ſaying, *I dare engage for nothing, but my heart goes in to Chriſt, as engaging to God for all;* then, in God's great name, I will ſay, it is a good flaſh indeed: even a flaſh of heavenly fire, kindled at Chriſt's warm heart towards you, which will never cool to eternity, though your live-coal ſhould come under the aſhes again.

What ſhall I ſay? O! is there any here, whoſe hearts are not yet engaged to Chriſt? O many, many! but, wo is me that there ſhould be any! O drunkard, ſwearer, Sabbath-breaker, whoremonger, mocker, here is a good bargain for you, even you whom we cannot allow to come to a communion-table; yet we allow you, yea God allows you and commands you, and we in his awful name and authority command you to come to Chriſt, and take a full pardon of all your ſins, and ſubſcribe to Chriſt's whole engagement; and you ſhall have a title not only to the communion-table below, but to the communion-table above that ſhall never be drawn. Away, man, away with all objections againſt Chriſt; let your objections be ten thouſand times more and greater

greater than they are, there is no room for one of them here; for Chriſt's engagement to do all things for you, anſwers all difficulties to you: and therefore, be you never ſuch a wretched ſinner, there is no objection you can make, but it is anſwered here, if your heart be not engaged to ſome other lovers. O, ſay you, I have not power, I cannot get my wicked heart engaged to him. O doleful and miſerable caſe! What is this, that infinite love and everlaſting kindneſs, flaming out of Chriſt's heart upon you, cannot engage your heart unto him! O! is there no power in this love? Is not love ſtrong as death, and the coals thereof coals of fire, which have a moſt vehement flame? O! here is a ſtrong flame, that is able to melt the hardeſt heart to the ſweeteſt compliance; and therefore, O will you bring theſe ſtrong cords of death, by which your heart is held, bring them to this fire, and it will burn and burſt them aſunder! Do not reſiſt the powerful love and precious grace of God, but be content to let it in to your heart, and it will draw and engage it. And therefore, ſeeing no argument will do but an argument of power; and ſeeing almighty Power uſes to ride in the chariot of this goſpel of grace; O then, will you join with me, and ſay, *O powerful arm of* JEHOVAH, *come and draw, come and draw; O exalted* JESUS, *come and draw, by the power of thy Spirit. Awake, O arm of the Lord, and put on ſtrength, and let the right-hand of the Lord do valiantly.* Let all the heart-leagues with luſts and other lovers than Chriſt be broken this day, and Chriſt alone have the whole heart engaged to him; and let all the people ſay, AMEN, *So be it*, LORD. And if your heart ſay, AMEN, I hope your heart is engaged and made *willing in a day of power*: and being made willing to come to his Chriſt, you ſhall be made welcome to come to his table; having ſigned his engagement to approach to God in your room to do all for you, you may approach with boldneſs to God in him, and expect the ſame welcome with your Cautioner that goes before you. *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto God? ſaith the Lord.*

A

DISCOURSE

Upon the ſame SUBJECT, after the SOLEMN WORK was ended.

NOW, my friends, after the great work is over, I would aſk you, (whether you have been communicants or not) Have your hearts been engaged to Chriſt this day, as the glorious Engager and Approacher to God for you? I would tell you, if your hearts have been engaged to him, then your hearts have been diſengaged from all things beſides him: you have been brought to forſake your father's houſe, and the people that are yours, and to *What have I any more to do with idols?* There hath been a mutual donation betwixt Chriſt and you, as man and wife give up themſelves to one another. Ye have rendered up your love to him, inſtead of all other lovers to whom your hearts were engaged before; and ye look upon yourſelves as bound in love and gratitude, never to give a back-look to any other lover, ſo long as your preſent Huſband lives; and behold *he lives for ever and ever:* whereas your former huſband, particularly the law, is dead, and ye are dead to it, Rom. vii. 4. and are to expect nothing from it, becauſe you have all, and more than all, in him to whom you are now engaged, and whoſe heart is engaged to you. Yea, as ye have rendered up your love to him as your Huſband, ſo ye have rendered up your arms to him as your Lord: ye have ſurrendered all the weapons that have been weapons of unrighteouſneſs, to be weapons of righteouſneſs unto holineſs, never to fight againſt him any more, but rather to fight under his banner againſt all his enemies, eſpecially under his banner of love; for the love of Chriſt will conſtrain you both to work and war. Now,

Firſt,

Firſt, A word to you whoſe hearts have *never yet been engaged to Chriſt*. O do ye know what for a caſe ye are in? and whence it is that your hearts are not engaged to Chriſt? Why, ye are even ignorant of glorious Chriſt: for, *They who know his name will love him, and put their truſt in him;* but you are *alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in you;* and *enemies in your minds by wicked works:* your *carnal mind is enmity againſt God, and is not ſubject to the law of God;* and your darkened mind is enmity againſt Chriſt, and is not ſubject to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt. Thus you are enemies to the Lord of life, and care not for him to be your Lord; ye are enemies to the word of life, and care not for that word to be your rule; ye are enemies to the Spirit of life, to the grace of life, the light of life, and the way of life: ye are dead, and under the power of death and of ſin, under the power of ſecurity and heart-obduration, having no favour of Chriſt about you; under the power of a ſordid choice, whereby ye ſet up the baſeſt of objects above our Lord and Maſter, whom yet the tongues of ſeraphims are not worthy to adore: behold, ye are chooſing ſome baſe luſts and idols in his room, or elſe inſolently capitulating with him upon the moſt ignoble and ignominious terms, to engage your heart to him, and to your luſts both, to him and to the world both, to him and to other lovers to be hugged in your boſoms with him, as if he were a miniſter of ſin, and a ſlave to ſerve your luſts; or at beſt, ye put him off with trifling delays from your heart, and let him ſtand at the door and knock, without ever having your heart engaged to come to him, or to let him come to you. Well, is that the matter with you? What is this that thou art doing, poor ſoul? Shall there be no gathering of the people to Shiloh for your part? Shall never our Lord's train and retinue be any whit the more for you? What! ſhall he have no train? Glory to him, that he will have a retinue to attend him, and no thanks to you; there ſhall be a number to follow the Lamb to heaven, tho' ye ſhould follow the devil to hell. But, Oh! may I yet beſpeak

you in the name of Jeſus! And, O Jeſus, may I beg thy leave to be thy ſpokeſman, to tell them thy words? And now, ſince he hath ſet me here, and given me leave to ſpeak for him, I muſt tell you ſome of his words to you.

And, Firſt, I will tell you what is his *complaining* word upon you; *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life: All day long have I ſtretched forth my hands to a diſobedient and gainſaying people.*

Again, I will tell you what is his *lamenting* word over you; *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem;* O Dunfermline, Dunfermline, *how often would I have gathered you as a hen doth her chickens under her wings, but you would not, you would not!*

Again, I would tell you what is his *aſtoniſhing* word; *Be aſtoniſhed, O heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid: for my people have committed two great evils, they have forſaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewn out to themſelves broken ciſterns that can hold no water.* They reject fulneſs itſelf, and turn to an empty world, as if it were their heaven and their happineſs.

Further, I muſt tell you what is his *weeping* word. O ſhall he weep alone, and none drop a tear with him, while he is grieved at the hardneſs of your heart; and with the tear in his eye, weeping over the city, and ſaying, *O if thou hadſt known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace!* but the time approaches when they ſhall be hid from thine eyes; the time of deſolation is coming, becauſe thou knoweſt not the time of thy viſitation. Do ye expect that theſe days will always laſt with you, and that you will never be deprived of ſermons, and miniſters, and ſacraments? Nay, they ſhall be hid from your eyes: *Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* Nay, ſince the laſt communion here, one of our dear helpers, in this preſbytery, from whoſe lips you uſed to hear the joyful ſound, he is gone away to the communion-table above; and glory to God, that he got a full gale of heavenly wind, to drive him in with holy joy and triumph to the harbour of glory. But now, O ſinners, have ye no regard to Chriſt weeping over you,

you, and ſaying, O if ye knew the day of your viſitation, before the ſhadows of the everlaſting evening be drawn upon you! And, O that ye knew the things that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes!

But again, I muſt tell you what is his *wrathful* and *threatening* word; *If you believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins;* and, *How ſhall ye eſcape, if ye neglect ſo great ſalvation?* If they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from heaven.

And, O! what if it come to his *farewel* word! *I go to my way, and ye ſhall ſee me no more,* till *he come in the clouds of heaven, and every eye ſhall ſee him;* and then you will come to that word with it, who live and die with a heart never engaged to him; you will come, I ſay, to that word with it, *O mountains and hills, fall upon us, and hide us from the face of the Lamb.*

And how dreadful will his *laſt* word be to you, *Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!* Ye did eat and drink in my houſe, and at my table, but I know you not; *depart from me;* ye adventured to approach to my table, but your hearts were not engaged to approach to me; nay, your hearts departed from me; therefore depart with a vengeance; *Depart from me, ye curſed.*

But, becauſe it is not come to that with you as yet, nay, it is yet a day of ſalvation; I would tell you next, his *expoſtulating* word, or his *intreating* word; he would gladly take his word of wrath again, that ye whoſe hearts are ſaying, *Away with him,* may yet take your word again: he is ſaying, *Why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? As I live, I have no pleaſure in your death; O turn ye, turn ye:* Come, come, the door is yet open, the door of ſalvation is caſt up wide to the walls, that ye all may run in; the draw-bridge of mercy is not yet taken up; the day of mercy is preſent; the day of judgment is but coming, and now I am looking to you, and ye are looking to me; and if ye be not looking on me, ye that are behind the pillars and lofts

loſts there, I hope ye are hearing me: and therefore, in the view of that moſt awful day, when we ſhall hear and ſee at another rate, before the flaming tribunal, I take witneſſes here, in the preſence of the great God, and all this numerous company, that I am giving you a new offer of Chriſt; as an Engager to do all for you; and that if you will but conſent to take him, and give him employment, yea, that if you do not reject him, you ſhall have him. None here ſhall have it to ſay, they got nothing at this communion: for, lo, you have got an offer of Chriſt, and if ye go away without him, we ſhall be witneſſes againſt one another at the great day of his appearance. O! *Now is the acceptable time, and now is the day of ſalvation.* O! are ye pleaſed? Are your hearts pleaſed with one to be a Cautioner for you, to ſave you both from ſin and hell, and that will engage for debt, and duty, and ſafety, and pave your way for approaching to God's glorious preſence for ever? Will ye have him for your head and captain? I allude to the words of Jephthah, Judges xi. 9. *If I fight for you and prevail, ſhall I be your head?* O yes, yes, ſay they; well, ſo ſays Chriſt to you, If I engage to ſatisfy juſtice for you, and anſwer all law-demands for you, and take away all your ſins, and fight all your battles, and do all *your work in you and for you*, ſhall I be your head? O! is *your heart* engaged to ſay, yes? O man, woman, old and young, that are here, do *your hearts* ſay, AMEN, AMEN; content to have him as a Prophet, to take away the darkneſs of my mind; content to take him as a Prieſt, to take away the guilt of all my ſins; and content to have him as a King, to take away the power of all my luſts and idols, and to make me holy and happy in himſelf, that his name may be glorified in me, and his grace magnified for ever: O then, I hope, the day of ſalvation is begun, that ſhall be celebrated with joy to eternity. Therefore, let me cloſe with a word, in the next place,

2*dly*, To you whoſe hearts are *engaged to the Lord Jeſus*, whether ye have been communicants or not; and becauſe ſome ſuch may be in doubts, whether ever they

they have believed in Chriſt truly and ſavingly. Why, if your hearts be truly engaged to Chriſt, never make a queſtion about your believing; for a heart engaged to him is the beſt believing in the world; Rom. x. 10. *With the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs*; and if your doubt remain, the beſt way of getting it reſolved, is, to let your heart go out upon him anew, as the glorious Engager and Approacher to God in your room. Are you afraid you come ſhort of heaven? So ye may indeed, unleſs Chriſt had engaged to bring you there; but if he lay ſtreſs upon his engagement, there is no fear. Are ye frightened you come ſhort of duty? So you may, if you be the only engager; but will ye truſt Chriſt for nothing? Where is your faith in his engagement, *to do all for you and in you?* What, may ſome ſay, would you have us all to turn Antinomians, to do nothing, and engage to do nothing, but leave all to Chriſt? The Lord pity a poor deluded world, that is wedded to a covenant of works. Will you tell me, man, is that Antinomianiſm, "to come out of yourſelf to "Chriſt for righteouſneſs, to anſwer all the demands "of the law as a covenant of works; and to come out "of yourſelf to Chriſt for ſtrength, to anſwer all the "commands of the law as a rule of life and holineſs, "and ſo to engage for nothing in your own perſon a-"lone, becauſe God cannot truſt your perſonal bond, "but to take Chriſt for your Cautioner, and to lay "ſtreſs on his engagement?"—And ſeeing you cannot approach to a holy and juſt God in yourſelf, look to Chriſt as the firſt Approacher for you, and then to approach to God in him. If you thus engage upon Chriſt's head, according to his promiſe, then engage to what you will; and if you approach to God in his name, then you may approach with boldneſs.

If you think of engaging and approaching in your own name and perſon, that is the old covenant-way of engaging and approaching; and therefore no wonder then, if that be your way, that you be overwhelmed with fears and doubts, and diſcouragements.

But let gallant faith come in and ſay, Chriſt hath engaged, and therefore I have nothing ado but to truſt

him

him for all, and in the uſe of means depend upon him: Chriſt hath approached before me, and therefore upon the red carpet of his juſtice-ſatisfying blood, I will go in to the holy of holies, even into the preſence of a juſt and holy God. O have you thus approached to God at this occaſion? I know not, ſay ye; I would be glad to know. Why, if ye would judge of your approach to God in Chriſt, judge of your approach, not by the *meaſure* of it; for believers are only admitted ſometimes as it were, to waſh his feet with their tears, like Mary, though at other times they may be privileged to ly in his boſom, like the beloved diſciple.—Judge not of your approach, by the *matter* of that which he gives you; for ſometimes you may be ſeeking one thing, and he may give another: It may be ye were ſeeking a feaſt of joy; but if he hath given you a feaſt of godly ſorrow, that is as good for you.—Judge not of your approach by your *former experiences*: It may be, ſome time a-day you was like a lamb in his boſom, ſaying, under a ſenſe of his love, *This is my Beloved*: and now, perhaps, you muſt ly like a dog at his feet, ſaying, under a ſenſe of ſin, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog*: well, that is a token of more a-coming.—Judge not of your approach by your *own ſenſe* and *apprehenſion*; for, David was not in a deſperate caſe when he was crying, as Pſal. xiii. 1. *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* When your longings are increaſed, though your ſtrength be ſmall, yet it is a notable feaſt; for, *He will ſatisfy the longing ſoul, and fill the hungry with good things.* Be thankful if you get as much as holds your ſoul in life, though you get not much. Know, that though he will be faithful to the accompliſhment of all his promiſes, and to do all that he hath engaged for, yet *the times and ſeaſons are in his hand*, and he hath his own meaſure of communication: if ſome of you received what you would be at, you would grow giddy, and be ready to cry with Peter, *It is good for us to be here*, and forget the other work that God hath for you in the world.—He is engaged by promiſe; but know, moreover, that he accompliſhes his promiſe according to your need,

and

and as it is for your good and advantage, and according as he hath work and buſineſs to put in your hand. Now, ſome here, I hope, have got their hearts engaged to approach to a God in Chriſt, upon the ground of Chriſt's engagement to approach to God in their room; and I hope they can ſay it with holy confidence, that their hearts have been drawn, and they have been cauſed to approach to God: and if ſo, then, I hope, you can ſay of the water of the well of ſalvation, O ſweet, ſweet! *O how ſweet are thy words to my taſte! ſweeter than honey to my mouth!* And that all other things in a world are but empty traſh, *loſs and dung, in compariſon of him.* O the gallant fops of the world would think ſhame of themſelves, if they knew how much contempt the pooreſt ſaints on earth do pour upon them, and all earthly glory and gallantry, when they get near to God! —Surely, if you have been favoured with this approach to a God in Chriſt, it hath brought you to a great *wondering* at the grace of God. *O what am I? And what is my father's houſe?* Why did he paſs by my neighbour, my huſband, my wife, my brother, my ſiſter, and fix his love upon me, the vileſt of them all?—It hath brought you to great *humility* and abaſement; *Now mine eyes have ſeen thee, therefore I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.*—And alſo to a great *longing* after more fellowſhip and communion with him; *O when wilt thou come unto me! O when ſhall I come and appear before thee! O to depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation! O to be among the four and twenty elders, that are before the throne! O to be drinking at the fountain-head!* Why, what means this language, poor ſoul? It ſeems you are juſt lying in his lap; *He hath loved you with an everlaſting love, and therefore with loving-kindneſs hath he drawn you:* His heart is engaged to you, and your heart is engaged to him; the Spirit hath been ſent to faſten Chriſt's heart and your heart together, and the knot ſhall never be looſed; *Him that cometh, I will in no wiſe caſt out.*

And now, that he is engaged to do all for you, O does not *equity* and *gratitude* require, that you be *wholly* engaged to him, and that for ever? Let your *hearts* be

more engaged to him than ever; let your *affections* be engaged to love him; let your *wills* be engaged to obey him in his preceptive and providential will; let your *thoughts* be engaged to think upon him and his loving-kindneſs; let your *tongues* be engaged to ſpeak to his praiſe; *In his temple ſhall every one ſpeak of his glory*: let your *whole life* be engaged to his ſervice, and all ſo engaged as to depend on him for all. He hath engaged for all, that you may depend on him for all; and all the ſervice you perform will be vain and to no purpoſe, unleſs it be done in the faith of his engagement to do all in you and for you. The believer hath two hands, the one a holding hand, and the other a working hand; like a woman ſpinning at the wheel, (to uſe a homely *ſimile*) the one hand holds the thread and draws it down, and the other hand goes round and ſets about the wheel; now, if ſhe do not hold the thread conſtantly with the one hand; it is to no purpoſe tho' the other hand go round with the wheel: even ſo it is here, the one hand of the believer is the hand of faith, whereby he takes faſt hold of Chriſt, and draws grace and virtue from him; the other is the hand of obedience and ſervice, which is accepted only in Chriſt, and upon the ſcore of his engaging for all, and to do all our work in us and for us. Now, if the hand of faith let go the hold of Chriſt, ſo as not to draw virtue from him, nor depend upon his engagement, it is in vain that the other hand of obedience and ſervice doth go its round; but, when faith keeps faſt hold of Chriſt's engagement, then there is profitable ſervice and obedience; for, *we are accepted in the Beloved*. Let faith take a view daily of your privileges in Chriſt: O how ſtrengthening for your work and warfare would it be to you, if you had the lively faith of his engagement! It would make you approach to God in every duty with boldneſs. Did you believe that his honour is engaged for your through-bearing, till you arrive at glory; that his faithfulneſs is engaged, his power is engaged, his name is engaged, his truth is engaged, his credit is at the ſtake; for he hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee nor for-*

forſake thee ; I will put my Spirit within thee, and cauſe thee to walk in my ſtatutes : Is he thus engaged ? Then let faith keep a faſt grip of his engagement ; and when faith is like to loſe the grip, remember, that he who hath engaged for every thing that concerns you, hath engaged for faith too, having promiſed to keep your *faith that it fail not*, and to *keep you by his power thro' faith unto ſalvation.* Therefore, in the want of faith, look to his engagement for it ; and in the weakneſs of faith, look to his engagement to ſtrengthen it ; and in the trial of faith, look to his engagement to ſupport it. Let not your faith depend upon your faith, but your faith and dependence be wholly on Chriſt, for all that you need with reſpect to work and warfare, duty or difficulty, ſoul or body, grace or glory, time or eternity ; then will God put your name and Chriſt's together, ſaying, *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me ?*

SERMON XXIX,---XXXIII.

The SAVING SIGHT; or, a View of GOD in CHRIST*.

JOHN xiv. 6.

—He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.—

MY dear friends, the great, glorious, and inviſible God hath been, this day, condeſcending to make himſelf viſible to us, notwithſtanding of the great diſtance betwixt him and us. There is a threefold diſtance that mars our ſight; there is a *natural* diſtance, that hinders the ſight of the natural underſtanding; there is a *local* diſtance, that mars bodily ſight; and there is a *moral* diſtance, that impedes ſpiritual ſight; all theſe, in certain reſpects, take place here.—In reſpect of the infinite *being* of God, there is an infinite *natural* diſtance betwixt him and us, who are but finite creatures, inſomuch that we cannot ſee him.—In reſpect of the *manhood* of Chriſt, now aſcended into heaven, there is a vaſt *local* diſtance betwixt him and us, that put him out of our view, who are on the earth.—In reſpect of the infinite *holineſs* of God, there is an infinite *moral* diſtance betwixt him and us, that we cannot perceive him through the dark clouds of ſin and corruption that over-caſt our ſouls. But ſuch is the condeſcending mercy of our God, that he is pleaſed to come near to us in ſuch ways as tend to remove theſe impediments

* This piece appears to be the ſubſtance of four ſermons. The firſt was preached on the Sabbath-evening, immediately after the celebration of the Lord's Supper, at Dunfermline, May 21ſt, 1727.; and the reſt, at the ſame place, after the ſolemnity. It hath undergone five impreſſions.

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out of the way of our ſeeing of him; and therefore, that the infinite *natural* diſtance betwixt him and us may not impede our ſeeing of him, he is pleaſed to come near to us in a *natural* way; I mean, by aſſuming our nature, that we may ſee him there; and that the vaſt *local* diſtance betwixt God, Chriſt, and us, may not interrupt our ſeeing of him, he is pleaſed to come near in a *ſacramental* way, that we may ſee him myſtically and ſacramentally there; and that the *moral* diſtance betwixt him and us may not impede our ſeeing of him, he comes near in a *ſpiritual* way, by his Spirit and grace, enlightening the eyes of ſinners, and ſcattering the clouds of ſin and corruption.

My friends, it is our infinite mercy, that we have other ways of ſeeing God than the blinded nations that want the goſpel. The way in which they may ſee God, ſo as to leave them inexcuſable, is common to them and us both. It is now ſome more than five thouſand years ſince the great and inviſible God erected the pillars of heaven, and earth, that *the inviſible things of him, from the creation of the world, might be clearly ſeen and underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead*, Rom. i. 20.; but becauſe no ſinner can, in this glaſs, get a ſaving ſight of God, he hath been pleaſed to ſet other glaſſes before our eyes. It is now more than ſeventeen hundred years ſince the ſame inviſible God, in the perſon of the eternal Word, came down in the likeneſs of fleſh and blood, that his glory might be made viſible to us through the glaſs and vail of our nature; *The word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory*, John i. 14. But after his work on earth was finiſhed, by his doing, dying, and riſing again, he aſcended into heaven, far out of our view; therefore, the ſame inviſible and eternal God, in ſuch a wonderful and ſtupenduous manner, does farther obſcure his glory, to make it evident to our dull apprehenſion, and viſible even to our earthly ſenſes, that he hath, this day, come down in the likeneſs of bread and wine, that he might accommodate himſelf both to our nature and neceſſities; and that being thus, though ſpiritually, yet ſacramentally and viſibly

ſibly preſent, we might ſee and apprehend his inviſible glory, love, grace, and mercy, under theſe viſible elements, inſomuch, that henceforth we need not be at a loſs to reſolve that ſeeming contradiction and wonderful myſtery, *namely*, that the infinite mercy of God in Chriſt is ſo deep, that no thought can fathom it, and yet ſo obvious, that every eye may ſee it, nor at a loſs to read Moſes's riddle, Heb. xi. 27. for now it is eaſy, eſpecially to the believer, whoſe *faith is the evidence of things not ſeen*, to explain how one may *ſee him that is inviſible*.

This goſpel ſacrament, we have been celebrating, is a glaſs, wherein we ſee Chriſt; Chriſt is a glaſs, wherein we ſee God: if our eyes, therefore, have been opened, by the Spirit of God, we have ſeen a great ſight this day. May I aſk you, then, where you have been, and what you have ſeen about this ſolemnity? Have you been at Jeruſalem, and ſeen the King's face? If you have ſeen the ſacramental elements, I aſk, what have you ſeen there? If you ſaw no more but bread and wine, ſurely you have been blind; for, Chriſt was there evidently ſet forth crucified before you.—But, if you have ſeen Chriſt there, then I aſk again, What have you ſeen? It may be you do not know what you have ſeen; for, as you, that have got no ſight of Chriſt, are at a greater loſs than you are capable to know and underſtand; becauſe, having miſſed a ſight of Chriſt, you have miſſed a ſight of God, and ſeen nothing worth the ſeeing: ſo you that have got a ſaving ſight of Chriſt, you have got a greater ſight than readily you are aware of. Perhaps you have ſeen Chriſt, and yet, with Philip here in the text, do not know that you have ſeen the Father. Perhaps God hath been in this place, and you knew it not: but if you have got a ſight of Chriſt, and yet do not know how much, and how far you have ſeen, or whether it be the true Chriſt you have ſeen, then be informed of this matter out of his own bleſſed lips, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* O! what an happy ſolemnity might we ſay this hath been, if it could be ſaid of a multitude here, as it was ſaid of the nobles

of

of Iſrael, Exod. xxiv. 11. *They ſaw God, and did eat and drink*; or, that *their eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts!* I doubt not but there are many here came to Dunfermline, with a deſign that they might *ſee the King in his beauty*, at this ſacramental occaſion, and to ſee the glory of God. Well, the brighteſt glaſs that ever God's glory was ſeen in, hath been, and is yet ſet before you. The great ſacramental ſight is, in a ſpiritual manner, as well as with bodily eyes, to ſee the ſacramental elements, ſo as in the elements to ſee Chriſt, and in Chriſt to ſee the Father: and though the ſacramental table be drawn, yet, while Chriſt is preſented to you in this goſpel, the glaſs is not yet withdrawn. You have a new occaſion to ſee him again; and not only to ſee him, but alſo to ſee whether you have ſeen him formerly, yea, or not; and to ſee what you have ſeen in him; for, *he that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

Having, before this ſolemnity, ſpoken to the preceding part of the verſe, and ſo to the connexion of this text with the context, I have the leſs ado this way; only, Chriſt having, ver. 6, 7. diſcovered himſelf as the only way to the Father, and as the Father's great repreſentative, inſomuch, that as there is *no coming to the Father, but by him*, nor *ſeeing of the Father, but in him*; ſo there is none that come to him, can miſs the Father, or fail of winning to the Father by him; and none that look to him, can loſe a ſight of the Father in him: notwithſtanding this ſweet doctrine, Philip having ſaid, *Shew us the Father*, ver. 8. the Lord Jeſus here ſpeaks to him both by way of reproof and inſtruction; he meekly reproves him, ſaying, *Have I been ſo long with thee, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip?* that you ſhould talk ſo ignorantly, after I have taught you ſo plainly, that, in knowing me, you know the Father: but our Lord, who is ſuch a meek reprover, is alſo an indefatigable inſtructer; and therefore again he kindly inſtructs him in the words of the text, ſaying, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* As it is an ignorant, ſo it is a needleſs petition for you, Philip, to ask of me, ſaying, *Shew us the Father*, ſince I have told

you

you, that there is no way of knowing the Father savingly, but by knowing me; and if you knew me more, you would know the Father more: let me, therefore, again tell you, Philip, and, in you, all my disciples to the end of the world, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.*

In which words you have the believer's *fiducial vision*, which is much the same *specifically* with the *beatifically* vision that he will have in heaven for ever, notwithstanding of whatever *gradual* difference there will be betwixt them. Particularly,

1. You have the *act* of this vision, it is called a SEEING; and being expressed by sight, it imports a clear and distinct knowledge.

2. You have the *immediate object* of this vision, namely, CHRIST, who is here speaking, *He that hath seen me;* not only ME, as God co-essential with the Father; ME, as the Son of God, the second person of the glorious Trinity; but also ME, as God-man, Mediator betwixt God and man; ME, as *the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.*

3. You have the *ultimate object* of this vision, namely, the FATHER; he *hath seen the Father;* that is, either the Father essentially considered, as God; one God with the Son and the Holy Ghost; or personally considered, as the first person of the glorious Trinity, and as *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* And here is the farthest sight of faith's prospect in time, the far end of faith's view, even to see the Father in Christ.

4. You have here the *connexion* betwixt the act of seeing the *immediate object*, with the act of seeing the *ultimate object*, flowing from the essential *oneness* betwixt the Father and the Son, notwistanding of their personal distinction: *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.* Of this mysterious *oneness* as the foundation of this connexion betwixt seeing him, and seeing the Father, the Lord Jesus insists, ver. 10. saying, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* And again, ver. 11. *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* Hence the doctrine

trine I incline to treat of, for explaining this purpoſe more fully, is this:

DOCT. *That ſuch is the* oneneſs *betwixt Chriſt and the Father, that he that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father.*

Though believers, who have ſeen, and *ſee but through a glaſs darkly*, may not diſtinctly know that they have ſeen the Father, when they have ſeen Chriſt, as the context clears; yet ſuch is the myſterious *unity* and *oneneſs* betwixt glorious Chriſt, and his glorious Father, that a ſaving ſight of Chriſt does neceſſarily carry in it a ſaving ſight of the Father, as Chriſt declares, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

And now, my friends, ſo great is the ſubject I am propoſing to ſpeak of, that frequently I have had thoughts of giving it over, as too ſublime and glorious for me to handle. It is ſuch, that if we could ſpeak aright about it, not only *elect ſinners*, but *elect angels, who pry into the goſpel myſtery*, might be edified by it. If we ſhould eſſay to ſpeak of the heaven of heavens, and all the glory of it, it would not be ſuch a great ſubject as to ſpeak of *ſeeing Chriſt*, and of *ſeeing the Father in him.* They are blind that do not ſee the need we have of the aſſiſtance of the eternal Spirit, who *proceeds from the Father and the Son*, when we are thus eſſaying to ſpeak of ſeeing the Father in the Son. Therefore, O endeavour, with your hearts, to lift up a prayer, for the conduct and help of the Spirit of God and of glory, that in ſpeaking and hearing of ſuch a ſubject, we may ſee the glory of Chriſt, and the glory of the Father in him.

The method I propoſe to follow in clearing and illuſtrating this doctrine, as the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to aſſiſt, is this,

I. To ſpeak of that ONENESS that is betwixt the Father and the Son.

II. To offer ſome *thoughts*, or *remarks*, concerning a *ſaving ſight* of Chriſt.

III. To ſhew in what *reſpects* it is, that they who *ſee* CHRIST, *ſee the* FATHER.

IV. *How*, and in what *manner* the Father is ſeen in Chriſt.

V. Offer ſome *grounds* of the doctrine, ſhewing whence it is, that they that ſee Chriſt, do ſee the Father.

VI. Draw ſome *inferences* from the whole, for application thereof.

I. The *firſt* thing propoſed is, to ſpeak of the ONENESS that is betwixt the Father and the Son. This *oneneſs* is declared by our Lord Jeſus; and, indeed, it is a myſtery of pure revelation, and what we could not otherwiſe know; and it is what we cannot fully comprehend: yet it is the object of our faith, ver. 10, 11. *Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* It is what our Lord Jeſus tells his diſciples they ſhall more fully know afterwards, ver. 20. *At that day ye ſhall know that I am in my Father; and you in me, and I in you.* Our Lord Jeſus expreſly aſſerts this *oneneſs*, John x. 30. *I and my Father are one.* He makes it the ground of all Chriſtian unity, John xvii. 21. *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be* ONE *in us.* Hence alſo our Lord Jeſus, much in the ſame manner as in the words of the text, John xii. 44, 45. *He that believeth on me, believeth on him that ſent me. He that ſeeth me, ſeeth him that ſent me.* Such then is the *oneneſs* betwixt the Father and the Son, that he who *hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father.* But to explain this oneneſs a little more particularly, we muſt conſider,

1*ſt*, *Negatively*, that we are not to underſtand this *oneneſs* in reſpect of *perſonality*; the Father and the Son are not one perſon, but two perſons: the Father is one perſon, and the Son is another perſon of the adorable Trinity. They are diſtinct in reſpect of perſonal properties, *namely*, it is proper to the Father to *beget* the Son; and to the Son to be *begotten* of the Father; even as it is to the Holy Ghoſt to *proceed* from the Father and the Son, from all eternity. I hope I need not

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ſtand to enlarge upon this to you, that make uſe of our Catechiſms, with the ſcripture proofs; only carry ſtill along with you this perſonal diſtinction, the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father; the Father was not incarnate, nor did humble himſelf and die for ſinners as Chriſt did; the Father *ſent the Son*,—Neither are you to underſtand this *oneneſs* betwixt Chriſt and the Father in reſpect of Chriſt's *humanity*; the two natures of Chriſt muſt not be confounded; the humanity of Chriſt is not one with God; the humanity is unite to Chriſt the Son, not to the Father: it is Chriſt who is Mediator, God-man, in one perſon. Hence, when Chriſt ſays, John xiv. 28. *My Father is greater than I*, it muſt be underſtood of Chriſt's humanity, and of Chriſt in the *form of a ſervant*; who yet, in regard of his divine nature, is *in the form of God, and thinks it no robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. ii. 6, 7. Therefore,

2*dly*, And *poſitively*, we are to view this *oneneſs* betwixt the Father and the Son in theſe following reſpects.

1. There is an *oneneſs* in point of *nature* and *eſſence* betwixt them; Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt are but one God; *Hear, O Iſrael, the Lord our God is* ONE JEHOVAH, Deut. vi. 4. *There are three that bear witneſs in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and theſe three are* ONE, 1 John v. 7. Hence it is ſaid, *In our Lord dwells all the fulneſs of the God-head bodily*, Col. ii. 9. The Father and the Son, then, are *one* in eſſence and being with the Holy Ghoſt: "Theſe three are "one God, the ſame in ſubſtance, equal in power and "glory"

2. There is an *oneneſs* betwixt the Father and the Son in point of *eſſential properties*, and *attributes*; Chriſt is, together with the Father and Holy Ghoſt, one Spirit, "infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in his being, wiſ-"dom, power, holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs, and truth." Is the Father *omnipotent?* ſo is the Son; He is *the mighty God*, Iſa. ix. 6.—Is the Father *omnipreſent?* ſo is the Son; *Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world*, Matth. xxviii. 20.; and *Where two or three are gathered*

together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them.—Is the Father *omniſcient?* ſo is the Son; *Thou that knoweſt all things, knows that I love thee*, John xxi. 17. Chriſt ſaid to Nathaniel, *When thou waſt under the fig-tree, I ſaw thee*, Here was a token that none in the world knew but Nathaniel himſelf, upon which he was convinced of the deity of Chriſt, which made him ſay, *Truly thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael.*—Is the Father *eternal?* ſo is Chriſt; *Before Abraham was I am.*—Is the Father *immortal?* ſo is Chriſt; *The King eternal and immortal.*—Is the Father *immutable?* ſo is Chriſt; *The ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for-ever, and without all variableneſs or ſhadow of turning.*

3. There is an *oneneſs* betwixt them in point of *work;* the works that are proper only to God are aſcribed to Chriſt. I cannot ſtand upon all the ſcriptures that are cited by orthodox divines on theſe ſubjects. In ſhort, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, ſays Chriſt.—The work of *creation* is aſcribed to him, *All things were made by him*, John i. 3. *Thou, Lord, in the beginning haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands*, Heb. i. 10.—The work of *preſervation* alſo, and the ſuſtentation of the world; *Upholding all things by the word of his power*, Heb. i. 3.—The work of *redemption;* Acts xx. 28. *Feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.*—The *donation of the Spirit*, is his work; *When the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he ſhall teſtify of me*, John xv. 26. And, *I will ſend him unto you.*—The *raiſing of the dead out of their graves*, is his work, and that both in a ſpiritual and corporal ſenſe; *The hour comes, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live*, John v. 25.—The *government of the world*, now, and the *judging of the world*, at the laſt day, is his work; *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*, John v. 22.; and he will *judge the world in righteouſneſs.*—The *inſtitution of ordinances and offices in the church*, is his work; Mat. xxviii. 19. *Go ye and teach all nations.* See Eph. iv. 11.

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4. There is an *oneneſs* betwixt the Father and the Son in point of *worſhip* and *honour*; and therefore all men are called to *honour the Son even as they honour the Father*; John v. 23. *He that honours not the Son, honours not the Father which ſent him.* All manner of worſhip due to the Father is due to the Son; therefore ſays Chriſt, John xiv. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* And Pſal. ii. 12. *Kiſs the Son leſt he be angry.* See Rev. v. 12, 13. and vii. 10, 11.

5. There is an *oneneſs* betwixt them in point of *will*. Though, as man, he hath a *will* diſtinct from his *will* as God, and ſo diſtinct from the Father's will, yet ſubject to the divine will in every thing; *Not my will, but thine be done.* But as God, his will is one and the ſame with the Father's will, and therefore what the Father wills Chriſt wills; John iv. 34. *My meat is to do the will of him that ſent me:* and again, *I delight to do thy will O my God; lo, I come to do thy will.*

6. There is an *oneneſs* of *happineſs* and *felicity* betwixt them, Rom. ix. 5. ſpeaking of the Jews, *Of whom according to the fleſh Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever.* Chriſt was from all eternity, and is the ever bleſſed God. There was a time, indeed, when the Son was humbled and made a *curſe for us*; but his eſſential glory and happineſs was never diminiſhed, however it was eclipſed: as God, he was as happy on the croſs, and in the grave, as ever he was.

7. There is an *oneneſs* betwixt them in point of *intereſt*; John xvii. 10. *All thine are mine, and mine are thine, and I am glorified in them.* This ſays, that they are both one in eſſence, and one in intereſt; there is no ſeparate or divided intereſt betwixt them. O happy ſouls that are intereſted in Chriſt! for the Father's intereſt and his are one and the ſame.

8. There is an *oneneſs* of *affection* betwixt them: the objects of the Father's love, are the objects of Chriſt's love; and the objects of Chriſt's love, are the objects of the Father's love; 2 Theſſ. ii. 16. *Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and God even our Father, which hath loved us.* John xvi. 21. *He that loves me ſhall be loved of my*

my Father; and I will love him. Hence Chriſt ſays to his beloved friends, John xvi. 27. *The Father himſelf loves you.* Was it only Chriſt's love that brought him to die and ſuffer for ſinners? nay, it was the Father's love alſo that ſent him on that errand.——See 1 John iv. 9, 10.

9. There is an *oneneſs* of *dignity* and *authority* betwixt them. Chriſt is the Angel of the covenant, of whom the Father ſays, Exod. xxiii. 21. *Beware of him, and obey his voice,—for my name is in him;* i. e. my authority is in him. His eſſential dignity and authority is the ſame with the Father's; he *thinks it no robbery to be equal with God:* he does not rob the Father of his authority when he makes himſelf equal with him; for, as God, the dignity and authority of both is one and the ſame; and as Mediator, he hath a donative right to all the power and ſovereignty; *All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me* Matth. xxviii. 18.

10. There is an *oneneſs* betwixt them in point of *ſupreme Deity, ſelf-exiſtence, ſelf-ſufficiency,* and *independency:* Hence the ſupreme throne is called *the throne of God, and of the Lamb,* Revel. xxii. 1. Hence ſays the Father to him, Pſalm xlv. 6. compared with Heb. i. 8. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* And hence ſays he of himſelf, Iſaiah xlv. 21, 22. *There is no God elſe beſides me, a juſt God and a Saviour; and there is none beſide me. Look to me, and be ſaved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none elſe.* Hence his name is JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU, Jerem. xxiii. 6. *The Lord our righteouſneſs.* Hence alſo called JEHOVAH, Malachi iii. 1. and elſewhere. Hence Paul ſays, *He is God over all,* in the fore-cited Rom. ix. 5. And the apoſtle John, 1 John v. 20. *This is the true God, and eternal Life.* Hence alſo, theſe that get a ſaving manifeſtation of him, cry out with Thomas, *My Lord and my God,* John xx. 28. as ſeeing that *in him dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily:* though, indeed, in point of perſonality, the Father is the firſt perſon; yet in point of eſſence, or eſſentially conſidered, Chriſt is the ſame, ſupreme, ſelf-exiſtent, ſelf-ſufficient,

ſufficient, independent, inviſible, and eternal God with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt. But I muſt not enlarge upon this point, that I may overtake the reſt.—Only thus much ſhall ſuffice for a touch at that *oneneſs* that is betwixt the Father and the Son, that lays the foundation for the other part of the doctrine of Chriſt here, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

II. The *ſecond* thing propoſed was, to offer ſome *thoughts* concerning the *ſeeing of Chriſt*, eſpecially a ſaving ſight of him in whom the Father is ſeen. What I would ſay on this head, may be laid open in the following *remarks*, for giving you a view of this matter, namely, *ſeeing of Chriſt.*

1. *Remark*, "That there are *ſeveral ways* wherein "natural men may ſee Chriſt to little advantage." There is a *bodily* ſight of Chriſt, that many got when he was upon the earth; they ſaw him who was God, though yet they did not ſee God in Chriſt, nor believe in him; *Ye have ſeen me, and believe not*, John vi. 56. —There is a *mental* ſight of Chriſt, and a *rational* view of God, that natural men may have when they apprehend the *inviſible things of God in the works of creation*, Romans i. 20. They may ſee it was an infinite power that made theſe viſible heavens, ſun, moon, and ſtars: and hence it is ſaid of the heathen, *They knew God, yet glorified him not as God*, verſe 21.—There is a *ſpiritual* kind of ſight of Chriſt that natural men may have by the common illumination of the Spirit. Thus Balaam had his eyes ſtrangely opened, and ſaw the *viſions of the Almighty* Thus the apoſtates, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. were enlightened, and ſome are ſaid, *through the knowledge of Chriſt*, to *eſcape the pollutions of the world*; yet afterwards are ſo entangled therein, that their *latter end is worſe than the beginning*, 2 Peter ii. 20.—Beſides, there is a *wrathful* ſight of Chriſt, that all the wicked world will have at the day of judgment; for, *Behold, he comes with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo that pierced, and all nations ſhall wail becauſe of him.* None of theſe are the ſight of Chriſt here

here to be underſtood: it is a ſaving ſight of Chriſt we ſpeak of.

2. *Remark.* "That there is a *goſpel-ſight* of Chriſt, "that is either more common to the viſible church, or "more ſpecial to the inviſible." The *more common* is that which the whole viſible church have beyond the outfield of the heathen world, Titus ii. 11. *The grace of God that bringeth ſalvation hath appeared to all men;* i. e. to all the viſible church that have the goſpel preached to them; they have ſo far the objective revelation and diſcovery of Chriſt, and the glory of God's grace in him ſet before them. Like Chorazin and Bethſaida, they are lifted up to heaven, and highly exalted with goſpel-privileges, goſpel-ordinances, goſpel-offers, goſpel-ſacraments, the miſimprovement whereof brings them down to hell.—The more *ſpecial* ſight of Chriſt, that is peculiar to the church inviſible, is that which reſults from the ſubjective, internal, ſaving, and powerful revelation of Chriſt into the heart; *he revealed his Son in me,* ſays Paul, Gal. i. 16. Hence,

3. A third *remark* I offer is, "That the *light* where-"in Chriſt is ſavingly ſeen, is his own divine light, Pſal. "xxxvi. 9. *In thy light ſhall we ſee light.*" As we cannot ſee the natural ſun, but in his own light; ſo we cannot ſee the Sun of righteouſneſs, till he himſelf ariſe with healing under his wings: and this divine light wherein we ſavingly ſee Chriſt is common to Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. It is in the Father's light, we ſee the Son; in the Son's light we ſee the Father; and in the Spirit's light we ſee both the Father and the Son. Hence the Father is ſaid to diſcover Chriſt. *No man can come to me, except the Father draw him. It is written in the prophets, they ſhall be all taught of God: every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me,* John vi. 4, 5.—The *Father* diſcovers the excellency of Chriſt to the ſoul; and the ſoul ſees him ſuch an excellent perſon, that it would give a world for him, not knowing all this time, that it is the Father of Chriſt that is diſcovering him: *It pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me,* ſays Paul; and again, *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into*

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our heart, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 6.—— Again, the *Son* is ſaid to diſcover the Father. As the Father comes and courts a bride for his Son, ſo when the match is drawn up, then the Bridegroom ſhews to the bride her friends, and particularly the Father, of which more afterwards: *No man hath ſeen God at any time, the only begotten Son, that is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*, John i. 18.— And then further, it is the Spirit that diſcovers both the Father and the Son, as he is both the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, he ſhews the Father in the Son, and hence is called *the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt*, Epheſians i. 17. *He ſhall glorify me*, ſays Chriſt, *for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhew it unto you*, John xvi. 14.

4. *Remark*, "That the *eye* whereby Chriſt is ſeen, "is the *eye of faith*." As before ſaving illumination we are dark, and without *light*; ſo, before ſaving faith, we are blind and without *ſight*: therefore, as Chriſt, when he diſcovers himſelf, does, with the one hand, reveal his glory; ſo, with the other, he gives the eye to ſee his glory. All men are born blind, and remain ſo till Chriſt open their eyes, and give faith; for, he is *the author and finiſher* thereof. This faith is the only eye whereby Chriſt is now ſeen; he cannot be ſavingly ſeen otherwiſe: faith is therefore called *the evidence of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1.; and thereby we *look not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen*, 2 Cor. iv. 18. Thereby *we ſee and behold, as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. It is true, the glory of Chriſt did once paſs before man's bodily eyes, but yet none ſaw it but believers by faith; *The Word was made fleſh, and we beheld his glory*, John i. 14. It is true alſo, that the glory of Chriſt will appear glorioufly at the great day of his appearance; but then there will be no faith either on Chriſt's right or left hand, ſuch as now we ſee him by. The *redeemed* will have no faith, nor any uſe for ſuch faith as now; for then, ſight and love will put an end to faith. The *damned*, on the other hand, tho'

they ſhall be no more unbelievers; for ſight and fear will put an end to their unbelief; yet their faith will be no ſaving faith then, but only ſuch as the devils now have, that believe and tremble: but from Chriſt's aſcending to heaven, till his coming again to judgment, faith is the only eye that can ſavingly ſee Chriſt. Hence,

5. *Remark* I offer is, "That there are *ſeveral periods* "wherein Chriſt hath been, and is to be ſeen by faith, "particularly theſe four."——First period was before his *coming in the fleſh*: thus *Abraham ſaw him afar off*; thus *Iſaiah ſaw his glory*; yea, and all the Old-teſtament ſaints, by faith, ſaw him in the promiſe and prophecy at a diſtance, Heb. xi. 13.——Second period was *after his coming*, and *before his death and ſuffering* on the croſs; thus old Simeon ſaw him by faith, Luke ii. 30. *Mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* It was a great bleſſing to ſee Chriſt in the fleſh; but many did ſo, that yet did not ſee him believingly, as his true diſciples did, John i. 14.——Third period was *after his death, before his aſcenſion*; thus all the diſciples of Chriſt ſaw him, and were *glad when they ſaw the Lord.* Indeed, while he was yet lying in the grave, their faith was like to give up the ghoſt; alſo, *we truſted that it had been he that ſhould have redeemed Iſrael, but now he is crucified, dead, and buried*: they were at a loſs to know, whether they ſhould repent of their faith or of their unbelief. Indeed the eye of faith was much tried, when Chriſt, the object of it, was brought ſo low: their faith had difficulties to grapple with, which ours want now, when we ſee him crowned with glory and honour.——Therefore the fourth period is *after his aſcenſion to heaven*, till his *ſecond coming*; and in this period we, and all other believers, to the end of the world, remain while here; and the farther he is removed from the view of the eye of the body, the more properly is he the object of the eye of faith, which can behold him through the clouds, though he be in heaven, and we on the earth.

6. *Remark* I offer, is, "That there are *certain ſea-* "*ſons* wherein Chriſt, in a ſpecial manner is ſeen;"

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particularly the day of *converſion* is a day wherein Chriſt is firſt ſeen: when Paul was converted, *God revealed his Son in him.* If you be a believer, and would know when you was firſt converted, it was even when you had the firſt view of Chriſt and his glory. It is by the power of this diſcovery of Chriſt that faith is wrought, while the *goſpel comes not in word only* to the ſoul, *but in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance.* —But again, ſometimes the diſcovery he makes of himſelf afterwards may be more ſenſible and remarkable, when, perhaps, on the back of a *long deſertion*, he returns, and ſays, *I remember the kindneſs of thy youth, and the love of thine eſpouſals. I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedſt the pillar, and vowedſt the vow unto me.* Sometimes to ſhew his holineſs and goodneſs, as being the *rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him*, he is pleaſed to ſhew himſelf after a courſe of ſpiritual diligence. Thus Moſes prays and cries, ſaying, *I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy glory;* and accordingly, *the Lord makes all his goodneſs paſs before him*, Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19. Indeed, if there were more of Moſes's ſpirit, it would be better with us. We receive not, becauſe we aſk not.—Sometimes again, to ſhew his ſovereignty, and the freedom of his grace, he gives a ſight of himſelf to a *backſliding child*, and courts him back with kindneſs, ſaying, *Thou haſt not called on me, O Jacob; thou haſt been weary of me, O Iſrael; thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins, and wearied me with thine iniquities; yet I, even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins*, Iſaiah xliii. 24, 25. It is, indeed, an amazing condeſcenſion, that the Lord ſhould pleaſe to give a glance of himſelf, even upon the back of hainous provocations; yet thus he is pleaſed many times to give them occaſion to ſay, *It is the voice of my Beloved; behold, he cometh ſkipping on the mountains, and leaping upon the hills; making all the hills and mountains of ſin, guilt and ſeparation, to melt down before him.* And, indeed, nothing melts their hard heart ſo much as to ſee him thus coming.—Sometimes their *ſuffering ſeaſon* is his time of

ſhewing himſelf, and of their ſeeing him: *If you be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are you; for the Spirit of God and of glory reſteth on you*, 1 Peter iv. 14.—Sometimes a *dying* ſeaſon is another time of their ſeeing him; thus Stephen, when they were ſtoning him to death, he *looked up, and ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right-hand of God.*—— There are, I ſay, certain ſeaſons of their ſeeing Chriſt. But I proceed.

7. *Remark* I offer, is, "That there are *various re-* "*ſpects* and *various degrees* wherein perſons may be "ſaid to ſee Chriſt ſavingly;" particularly when he manifeſts himſelf to them, as he does not manifeſt himſelf to the world. See John xiv. 21, 22, 23. His people may be ſaid to ſee him, when he makes them ſenſible of his gracious preſence with them, and ſenſible of his ſpecial love towards them, and puts them in a condition to ſay, *He loved me, and gave himſelf for me*: and when, by this deep impreſſion of his gracious preſence, and ſweet perſuaſion of his ſpecial love, through the powerful breathing of his Spirit upon them, he draws forth their graces to a lively exerciſe; *lifts up the light of his countenance upon them;* and *makes them ſit down under his ſhadow with great delight;* when he clears up their intereſt in his love, ſaying, *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love, therefore with everlaſting loving-kindneſs have I drawn thee.* In a word, one may be ſaid to have ſeen Chriſt, when he comes with a word of grace, and work of power, and opens the locked heart, and melts the hard heart, and fixes the wandering heart, and humbles the proud heart, and heals the plagued heart, and draws the backward heart, and frees the fettered heart, ſpiritualizes the carnal heart, raiſes the drooping heart, helps and curbs the unbelieving heart, and comforts the dejected heart; and when he is pleaſed to give his convincing, quickening, ſtrengthening, ſanctifying, and directing preſence: but theſe things I cannot enlarge upon, only there are various degrees of ſeeing Chriſt, in whatever reſpect his people may be ſaid to ſee him. Some have more, and ſome leſs of this ſight. Some are brought

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to the banquetting-houſe, to get a full meal; others receive but a crumb that falls from the table; and particular believers have not always, and at all times, the like meaſure and degree of the outletting of his favour. Sometimes the ſoul may be brought to the ſuburbs of glory, and get ſuch a diſcovery of Chriſt, that he would be content the valley of viſion were his burial-place, ſaying, with Simeon, *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace; for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.*—At other times the view and diſcovery is of a lower degree, when faith is not riding ſo triumphantly, but fighting its way through many doubts and fears, trials and temptations, and ſenſible preſence much withdrawn.

8. *Remark* is, "That there are ſeveral *properties* of "a ſaving ſight of Chriſt that tend to give light con-"cerning it." For inſtance, this ſight of Chriſt is but *imperfect* here, and *partial*, in regard of what it will be hereafter, 1 Cor. xiii. 9. *Now we know in part;* and verſe 12. *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face.* Indeed their ſight is like a not-ſeeing, in compariſon to what one day it will be.——Again, this ſeeing of Chriſt, though imperfect, yet it is *unſpeakable.* Indeed, the joy that reſults from a ſight of Chriſt is unſpeakable; *In whom, though now we ſee him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* Who then can utter or expreſs the glory of Chriſt, the ſight whereof raiſes that unſpeakable joy?—This ſight of Chriſt is *ſupernatural; How is the glory of the Lord ſeen but by the Spirit of the Lord?* 2 Cor. iii. 18. It is God that muſt beſtow this bleſſing; fleſh and blood cannot reveal Chriſt to a man; *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, for they are ſpiritually diſcerned;* but *God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit,* 1 Cor. ii. 10, 14.—This ſight of Chriſt is an *amiable* ſight; for, *He is altogether lovely.* This makes his tabernacles amiable, becauſe they ſee the glory of God there; and every thing in God that they ſee is amiable; yea, you are not to think that the chil-

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dren of God ſee only one ſide of God, as it were, and not another. Tho' the Lord ſhews but part of himſelf at once, now a leſſer and then a greater part of himſelf, yet it is not to be thought as if they ſaw but one ſide of God and not another, or if he ſhewed his amiable ſide and concealed his terrible ſide; no, that which is moſt terrible in God to wicked men, that is alſo moſt amiable and lovely in the eyes of the ſaints; for a God in Chriſt is all amiable. His power, greatneſs, and juſtice, which the wicked abhor, appear to them in excellent glory.—Again, the ſight of Chriſt here is frequently *interrupted*, it is only in heaven that the ſaints have the uninterrupted viſion and fruition of God, without any cloud to darken their day; but here, no ſooner does the heart begin to open to Chriſt ſome time, than, alas! he is gone; *I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himſelf and was gone.*—Again, this ſight of Chriſt, however ſhort and inconſtant, yet it is always *ſweet* and *ſatisfying; ſweet* and *raviſhing; His mouth is moſt ſweet*, ſays the church: O how ſweet and ſatisfying are the ſmiles of his mouth! it is enough to make a heaven in the ſoul. *How ſweet are the words of his mouth! ſweeter than the honey and the honey comb.* When he manifeſts himſelf in a word of grace, the ſweetneſs is ſuch, that all ſweetneſs is but bitterneſs in compariſon thereof. How ſweet and ſatisfying is it when the day ſpring from on high viſits the ſoul, eſpecially after a long dark night of temptation, deſertion, and deſpondency, wherein the ſoul thought that God had forgotten to be gracious, and would never return. When the Sun of righteouſneſs breaks out below the black clouds, even of ſin and provocation, when the ſoul now ſees the power and glory of God in the ſanctuary, how is it *ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs*, and the *mouth praiſes him with joyful lips!* Again, this ſight of Chriſt is *convincing*, powerfully convincing; it carries ſo much evidence in it, as makes the ſoul cry out with Thomas, *My Lord, and my God; He that believeth hath the witneſs in himſelf.* Surely we do not ſee Chriſt ſleeping; nay, it is with open eyes and an open face; *All we with open face beholding, as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord.*

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According to the meaſure and degree of the manifeſtation, it will have ſome evidence, even as a man ſeeing the ſun, carries its own evidence along with it; though the ſight be dark in compariſon of what it will be, yet it is convincing in itſelf—And as it is convincing, ſo it is *affecting*. O! a ſight of Chriſt is moſt affecting, when it is a ſaving ſight; it affects with reverence, therefore it is ſaid of the diſciples, when they ſaw him *they worſhipped him*. It affects with joy; *Then were the diſciples glad when they ſaw the Lord*. It affects with holy fear; *When I ſaw him, I fell at his feet as dead*. It affects with wonder, and makes the ſoul cry out, RABBONI, *who is a God like unto thee?* It affects with ſelf-abhorrence; *Now mine eyes ſee thee wherefore I abhor myſelf*. It affects with ſelf-abaſement; *O what am I, and what is my father's houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* It affects with penitency and godly ſorrow; *They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn*. It affects with new vigour and courage; *They looked to him, and were enlightened, and their faces were not aſhamed*.

9. *Remark* is, "That there are many *means* where-"by, and glaſſes wherein we may ſee Chriſt."—Sometimes he is ſeen in the glaſs of his *outward works*, the viſible creation ſhews forth his divine glory; the very *heavens declare* it, ſays the pſalmiſt; and the ſpiritual eye will ſee Chriſt in the creatures, though *his glory is above the earth and heaven*, Pſal. cxlviii. 13.; yet his glory is in the earth and heaven, and in all his works, ſmall and great, inſomuch, that though they cannot ſavingly diſcover him, yet theſe that have got a ſaving diſcovery of him, may ſee more and more of his glory whereſoever they caſt their eyes, were it but on a creeping inſect, or a graſs pile.

Again, ſometimes he is ſeen in the glaſs of his *inward works*, more eſpecially when he works effectually, upon the heart, implanting the graces of his Spirit there, or afterwards making grace to grow, both in the root, by the increaſe of a holy and ſpiritual diſpoſition; and in the fruit, by a ſuitable goſpel walk and converſation. When he works any wonderful change upon the

the ſoul, whether it be yourſelves or others, and that you ſee he hath taken a gracious dealing with ſuch or ſuch an one, why, then you ſee there the finger of God; and that the Lord is near, his wonderous works declare.—Sometimes he is ſeen in the glaſs of his *providences;* common providences are common glaſſes, where he may be ſeen, whether they are judgment or mercy. As *the Lord is known by the judgment that he executes*, and by *the mercy that he renews every moment*, ſo his people will ſee him in a rod; they will ſee him in a deliverance; yea, the ſpiritual man will ſee more of the Lord in an ordinary meal, than the hypocrite ever ſaw at a communion-table. But there are alſo ſignal providences, wherein they get more ſignal views of him. When Abraham's knife was at his ſon's throat, he met with a notable providence; behold, a ram caught in a thicket by the horns, ready for him to ſacrifice in room of Iſaac. O! how much of God's glory did Abraham ſee in that providence! therefore he calls the name of the place JEHOVAH-JIREH, *In the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.* The Lord will provide remarkable proviſion, remarkable protection; and this or that remarkable providence hath been ſometimes the vehicle of a remarkable manifeſtation of the Lord's glory.—Again, he is to be ſeen ſometimes in the glaſs of the word; 2 Cor. 18. Rom. x. 6. John v. 39. *Search the ſcriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that teſtify of me.* Here then we may ſee him in the types, in the prophecies, in the promiſes, in the doctrines of the word, as the Antitype of all the types, the ſubſtance of all the ſhadows, the truth of all the prophecies, the fulneſs of all the promiſes, the centre of all the truths and lines of the word. In the precept, we ſee his holineſs; in the promiſe, we ſee his goodneſs; his juſtice, in the threatenings; his wiſdom, in the revelations of the word. Here a believer will ſometimes ſee Chriſt in a title or deſignation given him in the word. O the glory that is to be ſeen in that name JESUS, in that name IMMANUEL, in that name KING of SAINTS, KING of KINGS!—Sometimes in a *reſemblance* or *ſimile;* while he is reſembled

ſembled to a roſe, for beauty; to a rock, for ſtrength: to a treaſure, for bounty; to a riſing ſun, for glory. In this glaſs the ſoul will ſee him infinitely beyond all reſemblances. However, when any light from heaven is ſhining, you have no more ado, as it were, but to open your Bible, and there ſee Chriſt.—Again, he is to be ſeen in the glaſs of his *ordinances*, whether public, or private, or ſecret; hence his people many times ſee him in a duty, they ſee him in meditation, they ſee him in prayer; ſometimes they ſee him in a ſermon; while the miniſter is opening the word, the Lord is opening their underſtanding to diſcern Chriſt there; while they are hearing a ſermon; yea, ſometimes while they are reading a goſpel ſermon they will have Chriſt in their hand, as it were, Chriſt in their mouth, Chriſt in their eye; yea, Chriſt in their heart.—Finally, in the *ſacrament* Chriſt is to be ſeen; for, in baptiſm he is repreſented by the water, and the ſpiritual eye may ſee him there; and in the auguſt ordinance of the ſupper he is repreſented by the bread and wine; there he may be ſeen and known in the breaking of bread. All the believing views of Chriſt and ſights of him here-away are *mediate*, through the intervention of means and ordinances; not *immediate*, as they ſhall be above: *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly;* but the time comes when the glaſſes ſhall be broken, and believers *ſhall ſee him face to face, and ſee him as he is.* Rev. xxi. 22. *I ſaw no temple there; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*

The 10th and laſt *remark* is, "That Chriſt himſelf, who is the object of this ſight, is a moſt *glorious*, *full*, and *extenſive* object." There is more to be ſeen in Chriſt than all the angels in heaven can tell. This is a larger field than we ſhall be able to travel over through all eternity. O what glory is to be ſeen in his natures and perſon, as God-man in one perſon? To ſee him in his miſſion and commiſſion, as the Sent and Sealed of the Father; to ſee him in his offices, relations, and excellencies; in his doing, ſuffering, dying, riſing, aſcending, ſitting at the right-hand of God, interceding, and coming again to judgment; to ſee him in his furniture for

his work as Mediator betwixt God and man, as ſtanding ſo well affected to both parties and their intereſts, *namely*, his Father's honour and his people's happineſs both, and in whom both parties may confide: accordingly the Father truſts him with all the concerns of his glory; and well may his people truſt him with all the concerns of their ſalvation; yea, ſo furniſhed, that he is able to bring both parties together, and to decide the difference betwixt them, ſuch is his intereſt with God, and power with man. To ſee him in his fitneſs for us, as being a Prophet, to teach; a Prieſt to ſave; a King, to ſubdue; a Phyſician, to heal; a Friend, to help in all caſes: as having merit, to juſtify; Spirit, to ſanctify; blood, to waſh; grace, to pardon; fulneſs, to ſupply; ſweetneſs, to endear; and beauty, to allure. O how ſweet is it to ſee him fitted of infinite wiſdom to your need! And, do you not need him when you are in the dark, to enlighten you; when dead, to quicken you; when dull, to revive you; when in doubts, to reſolve you; when in fears, to encourage you; when you ſtagger, to eſtabliſh you; when you fall, to raiſe you; when you are tempted, to ſuccour you; when weak, to ſtrengthen you; when wandering, to reſtore you; in duties, to aſſiſt you; in difficulties, to guide you; in dangers, to guard you; when under bondage, to looſe you; when under burdens, to relieve you! None but Chriſt can do all this, and a thouſand times more; and if you were always looking to Chriſt, when you ſtand in need of him, your eyes would ſeldom be off him, for you are ſtill needing him in theſe reſpects. But it is the ſpecial deſign of the ſacrament to ſhew him forth in his death and ſuffering; there we ſee him as a crucified Chriſt, and we are to view his death and ſuffering, (1.) In the *cauſe* thereof: the *procuring* cauſe was ſin; *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions:* the *inſtrumental* cauſe was the devil and his inſtruments: the *moving* and *impulſive* cauſe was love; *He loved me, and gave himſelf for me:* the *efficient* or *effective* cauſe was God; *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him:* the *final* cauſe, or the fruit and effect, was God's glory, and our eternal redemption.

demption. (2.) In the *ſeverity* thereof, while he drank the cup of the Father's wrath to the bottom. (3.) In the *ſufficiency* thereof, for paying all the debt that was owing to the law and juſtice of God. (4.) In the *acceptableneſs* thereof, for it was a *ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour unto God.*——In a word, the principal glory to be ſeen in Chriſt, is, that *he that ſees him, ſees the Father.* And this leads me to,

III. The *third* head propoſed, namely, to ſhew in what *reſpects* they that ſee Chriſt ſee the Father; *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* I have ſhewed the *oneneſs* that is betwixt the Father and him in nature, properties, will, affection, authority, ſupremacy, and other ways: and therefore he that ſees Chriſt muſt ſee the Father in all theſe reſpects wherein he is one with him. There is no need of Philip's prayer here, *Lord, ſhew us the Father:* for, having ſeen Chriſt we have ſeen the Father. It is Chriſt and he alone that declares, repreſents, and makes known to us the eſſential glory of the inviſible God; and without him our underſtanding could make no approach to his divine excellency. It is in the face of Chriſt that we ſee the glory of God, 2 Cor. iv. 6. And now, if any would know whether they have got a ſaving ſight of Chriſt, here is the great diagnoſtic and infallible evidence thereof, namely, if you have ſeen the Father in him; and, indeed, as there is no ſeeing of the Father, but in the Son; ſo there is no ſaving ſight of the Son, without ſeeing the Father in him: here is the excellency of the glory of Chriſt that faith ſees; here is the very foundation of our holy religion, and the ground of all our hope of life and immortality, *God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf;* here is the *great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh:* here is the ſum of the goſpel, *viz.* the glory of God repreſented to us in the perſon and office of Chriſt as God-man, Mediator betwixt God and us. To ſee this glory is ſaving faith; not to ſee it, is damnable unbelief.

But to come more directly to the queſtion, to ſhew in what reſpect they that ſee Chriſt, do ſee the Father, it is needful we conſider,

1*ſt*, More generally in what *capacity* CHRIST is to be conſidered, when we ſee the Father in him; and in what *capacity* the FATHER is to be conſidered when we ſee him in Chriſt.

As to the former, *viz.* in what *capacity* CHRIST is to be conſidered, when we ſee the Father in him: why, in ſhort, he is to be conſidered,

1. As God the SON, the ſecond perſon of the ever bleſſed and ever adorable Trinity.

2. As MAN, or God incarnate; God-man in one perſon, clothed with the offices of Mediator, Redeemer, Saviour, and Surety for a number of loſt ſinners.

As to the latter, *viz.* in what *capacity* the FATHER is to be conſidered when we ſee him in Chriſt.

1. When Chriſt is conſidered as GOD, then the Father is to be conſidered *perſonally*, for the firſt perſon of the glorious Trinity.

2. When Chriſt is conſidered as MAN, then the Father is to be conſidered *eſſentially*; including Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, one in eſſence.

In both theſe reſpects Chriſt and the Father are ſpoken of in the text, as the context ſhews; for, in the following context, Chriſt is ſaid to be *in the Father*, and the *Father in him*, in the unity of the ſame divine eſſence, verſe 10.; in which reſpect, Chriſt being conſidered as GOD, the Father is taken *perſonally*; ſo, in the preceding context, Chriſt is ſaid to be the *way* to the Father; *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me; I am the way, no man cometh to the Father but by me*, ver. 1, 6. In which reſpect, Chriſt being conſidered as MAN, or God-man, the Father is to be taken *eſſentially*: for, as God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, eſſentially conſidered, did conſtitute Chriſt perſonally conſidered, and ſo clothed with our fleſh to be the way to God, and the repreſentative of the divine glory, namely, his own glory, as God, equally with the Father's, which are eſſentially the ſame; ſo Chriſt, the ſecond perſon,

perſon, conſidered as man, is the way to God eſſentially conſidered: nor does it involve any contradiction, that thus he ſhould be the way to himſelf, as well as to the Father; ſeeing it is as man, that he is the way to himſelf as God; and in him as man, we ſee his eſſential glory as well as the Father's: for, as perſonally conſidered, he is the eternal Son of the eternal Father; ſo eſſentially, he is the everlaſting Father, one in number with the firſt perſon; Iſaiah ix. 6. *The mighty God, the everlaſting Father;* compared with Deut. vi. 4. *The Lord our God is one Lord.*

However, though the text allows us not to exclude the conſideration of Chriſt *perſonally*, as GOD the SON; yet it is eſpecially as MAN that he is to be viewed by us, or in his incarnation, for therein he becomes the repreſentative of God to the church, 2 Cor. iv. 6.—And without him, under this conſideration, we cannot either ſee him or his Father; for Chriſt's divine perſon, abſolutely conſidered, is equally inviſible and inacceſſible to us as the Father is: in him, therefore, as man, we ſee the Father; *i. e.* we ſee God in him, he being the image of the inviſible God, and the great repreſentative of God unto us. But,

2*dly*, And more particularly, I proceed to ſhew in what *reſpects* they who *ſee Chriſt do ſee the Father:* in the utmoſt latitude that the text allows, it will import the following particulars.

1. That they who ſee Chriſt will ſee the Father's *nature* and *eſſence* in him; for, when the glory of the Godhead is diſcovered, then he is ſeen in whom dwells the fulneſs of the undivided eſſence of the Godhead bodily, Col. ii. 9.

2. They who ſee Chriſt will ſee the Father's *perſonality* in him; for, when he is truly ſeen, he is ſeen to be *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 3. Therefore, though the Father and the Son are not *one perſon;* yet, when the Son is ſeen, we ſee the Father's perſon in him as the *image* thereof.

3. They who ſee Chriſt ſee the Father's *relations* in him; I mean, his relation both to Chriſt, and to us in Chriſt,

Chriſt. When Chriſt is ſeen, then the Father's relations to *Chriſt* are ſeen ; that is, not only his relation to Chriſt by *nature*, as Chriſt is the only eternally *begotten of the Father ;* but alſo by *office*, as Chriſt is the *ſent* and *ſealed* of the Father to the mediatorial work. Yea, when Chriſt is ſeen, then the Father's relations to *us*, in Chriſt, are ſeen ; particularly as he is our God and Father in Chriſt : *I aſcend to my Father, and your Father : to my God, and your God*, John xx. 17. They who ſee Chriſt, or God in Chriſt, they cannot ſee him any other way than a *reconciled God and Father in him.* To ſee God out of Chriſt, is to ſee him as a *conſuming fire*, a Judge, and an Avenger ; but to ſee him in Chriſt, is to ſee him as a Friend and Father.

4. They who ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father's *face* in him ; *The God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Chriſt is the fair face of God : and as we ſee nothing of the body of a man, that is all clothed, but his face ; ſo God is clothed with ſuch robes of terrible majeſty, that we can ſee nothing of him but his face ; and happy are they who ſee his face by ſeeing him in Chriſt ; for, as the beſt ſight of a man is to ſee his face, ſo the beſt ſight of God is in Chriſt ; his brighteſt beauty, and greateſt glory is to be ſeen there. Hence the ſaints in ſcripture, when they ſought to ſee God, they ſtill ſought for a ſight of his face ; as Pſal. lxxx. 3, 7, 19. *Cauſe thy face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſafe.* The *ſeed of Jacob*, are called the *ſeekers of his face :* and where is the face and favour of God but in Chriſt ?

5. They who ſee Chriſt, they ſee the Father's *heart* in him. To ſee a man's heart is to know his mind, and ſee his ſecret thoughts that none but God and he know ; and to ſee this were little worth the ſeeing, ſince all hearts, by nature, are wicked ; and the *heart of the wicked is little worth :* but to ſee God's heart is a vaſt matter ; and yet when the believer ſees Chriſt's, he ſees God's heart, and ſome ſecrets there that none know but God and the believer himſelf that is looking

to

to Chriſt; Pſal. xxv. 14. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his covenant*; or, as it may be read, and is accordingly tranſlated in the margin, HIS COVENANT, TO MAKE THEM KNOW IT. You may conceive it thus; Chriſt is given for *the Covenant of the people*; this covenant is given to make them know the *ſecret of the Lord*, the Father's heart, mind, and will; and his glorious counſels are ſeen when Chriſt is ſeen. He lies in *the boſom of the Father*, John i. 18.; therefore, they who ſee Chriſt, cannot but ſee into his boſom: and, O they ſee far that ſee there? Some look to God, but never look to his heart and boſom: ſome look to his hands, in the works of creation; ſome look to his feet, in the ways of his providence: ſome look to his head, as it were, in his unſearchable decrees: but they loſe the right ſight of him who do not look to his heart and boſom. This is another ſort of a place than that which the angels ſpake of concerning the dead and buried body of the Lord Jeſus, *Come ſee the place where the Lord lay*, Mat. xxviii. 6. I may, in alluſion to it, ſay a greater word, *Come ſee the place where the Lord lay from all eternity; where he lies to this day; and will do for-ever*: that is, *the Father's boſom*. What! can that be ſeen? Yes; when you ſee Chriſt, you cannot miſs a ſight of the place where he lies.

6. They who ſee Chriſt, they ſee the Father's *properties* and *perfections* in him: and here to ſpeak of all theſe, would be to ſpeak for ever. I ſhall only name ſome of theſe glorious perfections, excellencies, and the properties of the divine majeſty that are ſeen in Chriſt, in ſuch a manner as they cannot be ſeen any where elſe. I paſs over the infinity, immenſity, and other ſuch excellencies of God, which yet are to be ſeen in Chriſt, that I may confine myſelf to ſome of theſe attributes of God, that are ordinarily more obvious to the believing eye of the ſoul that gets a ſaving ſight of Chriſt.

(1.) He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the infinite *wiſdom* of the Father in him, and in the work of redemption by him. We do not extenuate the diſplays

that

that are made of the divine wiſdom in the works of creation and providence; when taking a comparative view thereof, we ſet them vaſtly inferior to the diſcoveries that are made of *the manifold wiſdom of God*, in and through Jeſus Chriſt, Eph. iii. 9, 10. whoſe name is, *Chriſt, the Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24.; and *in whom are hid all the treaſures of divine wiſdom*, Col. ii 3. If the queſtion then be, as it is expreſt, Job xxviii. 12. *Where ſhall wiſdom be found? and what is the place of underſtanding? The deep ſays, It is not in me: the ſea ſays, It is not in me.* But, behold, here it is, even in him who ſays, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* As this wiſdom is, in itſelf, an eternal, eſſential property of the divine nature, we can have no comprehenſion of it, it ſtands at ſuch an infinite diſtance from us, but in and by Chriſt, and in him alone is manifeſted this *manifold wiſdom of God.* O the many foldings of wiſdom that are here! Chriſt is a vaſt volume, a great book, wherein we may ſee and read the *wiſdom of God in a myſtery.* This book is open to us in the goſpel, and if the Spirit of faith be allowed, we have no more ado, but to turn over the leaves, and in every page we will ſee written in capital letters, WISDOM, WISDOM, WISDOM; INFINITE WISDOM.—Wiſdom in *contriving* ſuch a ſalvation of ſinners, as ſhould redound to the greateſt glory of God.—Wiſdom in *chooſing* ſuch a perſon to be the Saviour and Redeemer, even the fitteſt perſon of all the three glorious perſons of the adorable Trinity, the middle perſon to be Midſman and Mediator betwixt God and man.—Wiſdom in *furniſhing* him with all the help and aſſiſtance in this work, that the other two glorious perſons could give him, while he is ſealed by the Father, and anointed by the Spirit: *Him hath God the Father ſealed: and the Spirit of the Lord God is upon him above meaſure.*—Wiſdom in *uniting* the moſt diſtant extremes, in joining God and man in one perſon, the infinite and eternal God with a piece of clay. O wiſdom, wiſdom ſhines here! Wiſdom in puniſhing the ſin, and yet pardoning the ſinner; taking vengeance on the crime, and yet ſhewing mercy on the criminal. This wiſdom of God ſhines in the face

face of Chriſt, the *Surety of the better teſtament.*—Wiſdom in bringing the *greateſt good* out of the *greateſt evil* and all by the moſt unlikely means; making ſin itſelf, which tends to the greateſt diſhonour of God, to contribute to his greateſt glory; while ſalvation from it, by Jeſus, brings in *glory to God to the higheſt;* and while in him alſo is brought life out of death, and the higheſt ſalvation out of the deepeſt humiliation.—Wiſdom in counter-acting the *policy* of the old ſerpent in ſuch a wonderful manner, making the *ſeed of the woman to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent;* and the babe of Bethlehem to conquer all the armed legions of hell.——But to turn over all the leaves of this book will be the work of eternity; however, all this wiſdom, and infinitely more, is to be ſeen in Chriſt.

(2.) He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father in his infinite *power;* for, as he is the *wiſdom of God;* ſo he is *the power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. It is no diſparagement to the diſplay of the power of God, in making of heaven and earth, and all things out of nothing, though we declare to you, that the power of God does not ſhine there ſo much as it does in Chriſt. Divine power is glorious in creation-work, but much more in ſalvation-work. It is more for God to redeem one ſinner, than to make a thouſand worlds. Our *help is laid upon one that is mighty:* and, how does the almighty power of God here ſhine in laying ſuch a weight upon the Redeemer's back, as ſhould have broken the back of all the angels in heaven; yea, under which the creation grones, and yet ſupporting him under ſo great a burden? What burden? Why, *The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all;* and, together with the burden of ſin, the burden of all the wrath that was due to it, that he might *deliver us from the wrath to come.*—Power in upholding him in this great ſervice; *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold*, Iſa. xlii. 1. —Power in enabling him to overcome all the powers of earth and hell, and making him to triumph over them on the croſs, and to ſpoil principalities and powers openly.—Power in giving him victory over ſin and death, that we might ſhare of his triumphs, and have victory

in him: *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. xv. 55.— Power in ſaving ſinners by the efficacy of his grace, the virtue of his Spirit, as well as by the merit of his blood, and in bringing them from the power of Satan unto God, which is more than to bring them from nothing to a being. In him we ſee that power of God, whereby *he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt*.

(3.) He that hath ſeen Chriſt hath ſeen the Father in his infinite *holineſs*. He is indeed *the holy One of God*; and *holineſs to the Lord*, is a title that peculiarly belongs to him, who was *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate from ſinners*. It is no diſparagement to the holineſs of all the angels and inhabitants of heaven, to ſay comparatively with him, that *the heavens are not clean in his ſight, and that he chargeth his angels with folly*. God hath, in Chriſt, diſcovered moſt clearly, *That he is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity*. Yea, in giving his Son to the death for our ſins, he hath declared, that he hates ſin, as much as he loves his eternal Son: *He gave himſelf for our ſins, according to the will of God*, Gal. i. 4. Thus God gave him, and he gave himſelf to take away ſin, which is ſo contrary to his holineſs. The Father put him upon this work, and held him to it, till he *finiſhed tranſgreſſion*, and *made an end of ſin*, by the *ſacrifice of himſelf*; therefore when we ſee Chriſt, we ſee infinite holineſs vindicated, and may cry out, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hoſts; the whole earth is full of his glory*.

(4.) He that hath ſeen Chriſt hath ſeen the Father in his infinite *juſtice* and *righteouſneſs*. Chriſt is ſet forth for this very end, to repreſent and declare this glorious attribute of the divine nature; *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins*, Rom. iii. 25. Not only to ſatisfy his juſtice, in puniſhing of ſin; but alſo to declare his juſtice, in pardoning of ſin; and both, in and through Chriſt the propitiation. It is no diminution of the glory of God's juſtice, that ſhines in the eternal damnation of the wicked world of men

men and devils, to aſſert, That the glory of his juſtice, in executing judgment upon ſin, appears more brightly in the face of Jeſus, as he was a ſacrifice to ſatisfy juſtice to the full, by one offering, which all the millions of the damned that are ſacrificed to incenſed juſtice, will never be able to do through all eternity.—God had a mind to ſave a number of ſinners, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God;* but the law, that required the death of the ſinner, and that *the ſoul that ſins ſhould die*, ſtood in the way; therefore God, rather than go contrary to his own law, will take payment, according to the law, of his own Son. Chriſt therefore pays all the debt that the law could crave; and thus God is glorified in his moſt exact righteouſneſs and infinite juſtice.

(5.) He that hath ſeen Chriſt hath ſeen the Father in his infinite *love*, *mercy*, and *grace: God is love*, ſays the apoſtle, 1 John iv. 8. But, where is this property of the divine nature manifeſted, ſeeing his wrath is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs of men, and we are compaſſed about with the evidences of his anger and diſpleaſure at this day? Where then ſhall we ſee that God is love? Why, the ſame apoſtle tells us, verſe 9. *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him: herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins.* Out of Chriſt, we ſee him a *conſuming fire;* but in Chriſt, we ſee that *God is love!* O the love of God that ſhines in his miſſion, perſon, and offices! Love in giving him to be a Saviour and Surety! Love, in giving him for us and to us! Love, in accepting the payment of our debt from him, and ſubſtituting him in our room! Love, in accepting us in him, and love in giving out to us the great bleſſings promiſed and purchaſed by him! O Love! love, without a parallel! Mercy, without a match! Wonderful mercy vented through a ſacrifice; ſovereign grace and goodneſs, in ſetting up ſuch a ſun as Chriſt in the firmament of the church mili-

tant and triumphant. The natural ſun runs his race, and rides his circuit from one end of the heaven to the other, and the benefit we enjoy thereby is a fruit of the goodneſs of God, as the God of providence; but, O the glorious race that the Sun of righteouſneſs runs from everlaſting to everlaſting! His circle is from one end of eternity to the other, if eternity, that is endleſs, may be thus conſidered; for, he *was ſet up from everlaſting* in the council of peace, and *to everlaſting* will he ſhine, and ſhew forth the goodneſs and mercy of God, as the God of grace.

(6.) He that hath ſeen Chriſt hath ſeen the Father in his infinite *faithfulneſs*, *veracity*, and *truth*; for, as he is the way to the Father, ſo he is the truth, John xiv. 6.; in whom the fidelity of the God of truth does ſhine. Here was the glory that the diſciples ſaw, John i. 14. *Full of grace and truth.* To ſee the truth of God in Chriſt is a noble ſight, on which our everlaſting ſafety and ſecurity does depend; and, behold, in Chriſt it is to be ſeen moſt conſpicuouſly. The truth of God in all the threatenings of the law ſhines in Chriſt, while theſe threatenings receive their accompliſhment in him, *As the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4. The truth of God in all the promiſes of the goſpel ſhines in Chriſt; *for in him they are all yea and amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. In Chriſt this miracle ſparkles, that God, in ſaving the ſinner, is true to his threatening, and true to his promiſe both; true to his threatening, that ſays, *The ſoul that ſins ſhall die*; and yet true to his promiſe alſo, that ſays, *I will love thee freely.* How gloriouſly do theſe oppoſites centre in Chriſt! And ſo the glory of truth, of the Father's truth, appears. He is true to his threatening in Chriſt, who hath endured the ſhock of it; and true to his promiſe in Chriſt alſo, who hath fulfilled the condition of it; and both by his obedience unto death, *even the death of the croſs.*

Thus the Father is ſeen in Chriſt, in reſpect of all theſe, and the like divine properties and perfections, which in Chriſt appear to be both his Father's attributes and his own. They are ſeen to be Chriſt's divine

vine perfections, and the perfections of the Father in him; *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*—— I would here ſay further,

7. They that ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father's *name* in him; *My name is in him*, ſays God, Exod. xxiii. 22. God's greateſt name is his name; for example, *What is his name?* Exod. iii. 13. God ſays unto Moſes, I AM THAT I AM, verſe 14. This explains his name JEHOVAH, and ſignifies that he is *ſelf-exiſtent*, having his being and eſſence of himſelf, that he is eternal and unchangeable, always the ſame; that we cannot by ſearching find him out, but that he for ever is what he ever was; and that he is the fountain of all beings. Now, it was Chriſt, the Angel of the covenant, that ſaid this to Moſes, when he *appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the buſh*, Exod. iii. 2. He diſcovered himſelf by this name, when he was to deliver Iſrael out of Egypt, which deliverance was but a figure of good things to come; and therefore you may ſee him again taking this name three times to himſelf in one chapter in the New Teſtament, John viii. 58. *Before Abraham was*, I AM, and ver. 24. *If ye believe not that* I AM *he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* The word in the original is, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, *that* I AM. And ſo it is verſe 28. *When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then ſhall ye know* ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, *that* I AM.——Now, Chriſt hath been lifted up on the pole of the croſs, on the pole of the ſacrament, on the pole of the goſpel, and exalted on the Father's right-hand. Do we know by this time that the name of the man that was crucified at Jeruſalem, is, I AM THAT I AM? Do we ſee his Father's name in him? *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

8. They that ſee Chriſt ſee the Father's *glory* in him; not only his name, but the glory of his name: not only his attributes, but the glory of his attributes: his name and attributes are indeed his glory; and when we ſee theſe we ſee the Father's glory. But what I further mean, is, that, in Chriſt, we ſee the glory of the *Father's glory*; and the glory and ſplendor of all theſe things that I have mentioned, This light is the

light

light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, who is the *brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon:* therefore in him we ſee not only the wiſdom of God, but the glory of his wiſdom; not only his power, but the glory of his power; not only his holineſs, but the glory of his holineſs; not only his juſtice and righteouſneſs, but the glory of his juſtice and righteouſneſs; not only his love, mercy, and grace; not only his faithfulneſs, veracity, and truth. When God diſcovers himſelf in Chriſt, then he is ſeen upon his higheſt throne, in his greateſt glory. O Sirs, let me tell you, that when only heaven is his throne, and the earth his footſtool, he appears infinitely more glorious, when diſplayed on ſuch a lofty throne. O but a *God in Chriſt*, which is the *throne of grace*, is alſo a *throne of glory;* and *Glory to God in the higheſt*, it is the *throne of God and of the Lamb.* If we ſee it, we cannot chooſe but ſing with the redeemed, *Salvation to our God that ſits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.* What ſhall I ſay? he that ſees Chriſt, not only ſees the Father's glory, but all the Father's glory; for he is not only the ſeat of his glory, but the ſeat and centre of all his glory; *In him dwells not only the fulneſs of God, but all the fulneſs of the Godhead*, Col. ii. 9.—— Tho' finite eyes can never ſee all that infinite fulneſs; yet all that ſee Chriſt do ſee that all that infinite fulneſs, that can never be fully ſeen, is in him. Tho' a man cannot comprehend the whole globe of the earth in his arms, or ſee it all at once, yet he may ſee it all in a lively repreſentation thereof in a map; even ſo, though we cannot ſee all this fulneſs comprehenſively, ſo as to comprehend it, yet we ſee it all repreſentatively in Chriſt, who is the lively and living repreſentative *of all the divine glory*, and the repoſitory *of all the divine fulneſs;* all the dimenſions of the *divine glory* are to be ſeen in him, even the height and depth, length and breadth thereof. In his humiliation we ſee the depth of the Father's love reaching down to hell to lift us up; in his exaltation we ſee the height of the Father's grace, raiſing us up to ſit with him in heavenly places; in the extent of his death we ſee the breadth of the Father's love,

love, extending, by divine deſtination, to all the promiſed ſeed, and, by the method of application, to whoſoever will. In the duration of his life, as a Prieſt for ever, we ſee the length of the Father's love, which is like himſelf, *From everlaſting to everlaſting;* and ſo in ſeeing Chriſt, in all his eſtates, we ſee the Father in all the *dimenſions of his glory*. So in all Chriſt's offices we ſee all the Father's treaſures; why, all the treaſures of the Father's wiſdom centre in his prophetical office, and that for our illumination; all the treaſures of the Father's righteouſneſs centre in his prieſtly office, and that for our juſtification; and all the treaſures of the Father's power centre in his kingly office, and that for our ſanctification; yea, all the treaſures of the Father's grace centre in him, as being *All in all* for our complete redemption. Thus *he is made of God unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. When we ſee Chriſt, then we ſee the Father in all his glory, in all his fulneſs, in all his treaſures, and that for our eternal ſalvation, our everlaſting conſolation and *good hope through peace*.

Thus I have given you a ſhort and poor hint at the reſolution of that queſtion, *He that hath ſeen Chriſt hath ſeen the Father;* inſomuch, that I ſay again, there is no need of Philip's prayer here, *Shew us the Father;* for he that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father: and, O happy they, whoſe eyes have ſeen *this glory of God in Chriſt*, while their ears are hearing of it! But I come now to,

IV. The *fourth* head propoſed, was to ſhew, *how* and in what *manner* the Father is ſeen in Chriſt. Beſides the light that the former head may give to this queſtion, I ſhall add theſe following particulars.

1. In Chriſt we ſee the Father *clearly* and *evidently*, ſo much is implied in the term SEEING; *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father*. To know God in Chriſt, is to ſee God, becauſe in Chriſt he is clearly and diſtinctly known: though faith and ſight differ in certain reſpects, yet faith is a kind of ſight; for, *it is the evidence of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1. In Chriſt we ſee clearly,

clearly and evidently him who *is inviſible*, ver. 27.—— Chriſt is the cleareſt and brighteſt glaſs that infinite wiſdom could contrive to repreſent the glory of the Father; and as the diſciples, when Chriſt was revealing the Father to them, John xvi. 27, 28, 29. cried out, *Lo, now ſpeakeſt thou plainly, and not in proverbs, or parables:* ſo the ſoul that ſees the Father in Chriſt, ſees him clearly and plainly, not in clouds and thick darkneſs. The Old-Teſtament church had, in types and ſacrifices, a dark repreſentation of Chriſt, but now we have in Chriſt, the antitype, a clear repreſentation of the Father; we now ſee him with *open face.*

2. In Chriſt we ſee the Father *ſavingly.* This is plain from the context, ſhewing that Chriſt, who is the glaſs, the true and living glaſs, in whom we ſee the Father, is alſo the true and living way by whom we come to the Father, and ſo enjoy him as our God and Father in Chriſt, verſe 6.——My friends, to ſee the glory of Chriſt, and the glory of the Father in him, is ſuch a ſaving ſight, that ſalvation is inſeparable from it; nay, ſalvation is in it; yea more, it is the very thing that formally conſtitutes everlaſting life and ſalvation: *This is life eternal to know thee*, &c. John xvii. 3. The true and faithful witneſs who cannot lye, is ſaying this to his Father, and you may be ſure he will not lye to him or you either. Further, ſays he, *This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent;* that is, to ſee Chriſt, and to ſee the Father in him is eternal life: to ſee God out of Chriſt is no ſaving, but a confounding ſight to a ſinner, but to ſee him in Chriſt, is to ſee him *ſavingly; Look to me, and be ſaved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and beſides me there is none elſe.*

3. In Chriſt we ſee the Father *comfortably* and *ſatisfyingly:* it is the beſt antidote in all the world, againſt all heart-trouble, therefore, ſays Chriſt here, verſe 1. of this chapter, *Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* To believe in God, as a Judge and Law-giver, is neceſſary for the ſecure, to awaken their conſcience, but this faith will never pacify the conſcience, till you believe alſo in me, ſays

ſays Chriſt. I have given ſatisfaction to the Judge, and his law both, therefore believe alſo in me, that you may get ſatisfaction to your heart and conſcience both; *Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* God out of Chriſt is the moſt terrible; but in Chriſt the moſt comfortable ſight that ever was ſeen; and no wonder that the heart be pleaſed when it ſees in Chriſt that God is well-pleaſed; *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.* To ſee God in Chriſt, is to ſee the Father ſmiling in the Son's face; and ſurely they are unbelievers that have not ſeen God to be well-pleaſed in him. I do not love to diſcourage any poor drooping believer: and I ſhall not deny, but that there are ſome believers that have very little comfort, but I can hardly think, that they are believers that never had any comfort leſs or more. What! if ever you ſaw God in Chriſt, will you tell me, dare you ſay for your life that it was no comfortable ſight; If ſo, then I truly think you never yet ſaw him. I aſk not what comfort you feel at preſent. It may be you are ſtill drooping by reaſon of unbelief; but if ever you ſaw him, and his Father in him, I am ſure it was a joyful ſight at the time, and afforded ſome ſatisfaction: ſo much is imported in Chriſt's aſſertion in the text, compared with Philip's petition in the preceding verſe, *Shew us the Father, and it ſufficeth;* importing, that the ſight and knowledge of God is full of ſatisfaction and refreſhment, tending to give full contentment.—Well, ſays Chriſt, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father*, and there is the moſt ſatisfying ſight of the Father that you can have. It is true, the way of ſeeing God by faith, as revealed in his Son, is a way not ſatisfactory to a carnal heart, and believers themſelves have a jealouſy of it, ſo far as they are carnal, and unbelieving, which was the ground of Chriſt's reproof to Philip here, upon which he alſo inſtructs him, that here is the only ſatisfying ſight to faith; *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

4. In Chriſt we ſee the Father *applicatively*, and as near at hand. It was unbelief in Philip, that ſaid, *Shew us the Father*, as if the Father had been ſtill at

ſuch a diſtance as to be inacceſſible and inviſible; nay, but ſays Chriſt, whatever God be in himſelf abſolutely, and though he remain ſtill in his nature inviſible and incomprehenſible, yet in me, and in me alone, he comes ſo near as that you may ſee him, and embrace him by faith; *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* To ſee God abſolutely with mortal bodily eyes is impoſſible, he ſtands at an infinite diſtance from us. When we ſee him in the creation, or in any external repreſentation of his glory, we ſee him at an infinite natural diſtance from us as creatures; when we ſee him in the law, or covenant of works, we ſee him at an infinite moral diſtance from us as ſinners; yea, there we ſee him compaſſed about with flames of wrath, ready to devour us: but when, through the goſpel glaſs, we ſee him in Chriſt, then we ſee him near at hand; yea, nearly related to us as our God, Friend, and Father in Chriſt. And hence the ſight of faith brings in Thomas's exclamation, John xx. 28. *My Lord, and my God.*

5. In Chriſt we ſee the Father *diſcriminatively;* that is, ſo as to diſcern the perſonal diſtinction betwixt the Father and the Son, notwithſtanding of their eſſential *oneneſs.* The very run of the text and context, both before and after it, declares the diſtinction. O Sirs! the three diſtinct perſons of the glorious Trinity, in their diſtinct perſonal properties, as it is an unfathomable myſtery in itſelf, ſo it would have been for ever hidden and unſeen to us, if Chriſt, the Sun of righteouſneſs, had not riſen; and, in his light, diſcovered the ſame, ſo as we have, in Chriſt, a diſcriminative view of the Father; for we cannot ſee the Son of God in the light of the eternal Spirit, but we muſt, at the ſame time, ſee, that he is the eternal Son of an eternal Father. The diſtinct œconomy and adminiſtration of the three perſons, in the work of our redemption, gives us a clearer view of their perſonal diſtinction than can be had in any other glaſs; nay, I know no other glaſs that can make it known. The glaſs of the creatures ſays, It is not in me to ſhew that: the glaſs of the law

law ſays, It is not in me; but the glaſs of the goſpel ſaith, Ἕυρηκα, *I have found it.* And when the Spirit promiſed in he goſpel comes to glorify Chriſt, then, in the glory of the Son, we ſee the glory of the Father: *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* Hence,

6. In Chriſt we ſee the Father *truly: He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* It expreſſes the truth of the matter out of the mouth of him that is truth itſelf. He that hath a true ſight of Chriſt, hath a true ſight of the Father, and a ſight of the true God. *We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true. This is the true God and eternal life,* 1 John v. 20. Ye that never yet ſaw Chriſt, you are yet *atheiſts, without God;* you never ſaw the true God to this day, but only a falſe god; a god of your own deviſing; an image of your own brain. But as for you, believer, when you got a true ſight of Chriſt, then you got a true ſight of the true God.—We ſee the true Father in the true Son, by the light of the Spirit of truth teſtifying of Chriſt.

7. In Chriſt we ſee the Father, not only truly, but *glorioufly.* This is plain alſo in the text, for notwithſtanding the Lord Jeſus had ſaid, verſe 7. *If ye had known me, ye ſhould have known my Father alſo:* yea, *and henceforth ye know him, and have ſeen him*; yet Philip ſays, *Lord, ſhew us thy Father,* as if there had been ſome other and better way of knowing the Father than by knowing and ſeeing Chriſt; whereupon Chriſt reproves him, and lets him know, that this was the beſt, the only, and the moſt glorious way: *Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip? He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father; and how ſayeſt thou, Shew us the Father?* If you would have another way of your own, might Chriſt ſay, whereby to ſee the Father, you ſhall find, that the way you would be at, is either impoſſible, or vaſtly inferior to what you enjoy; for, whereas you ſay, *Shew us the Father;* if you deſire an immediate ſight of him out of me, that is impoſſible, and would conſume mortal men, ſo as you know not what you would be at: or, if you

deſire only ſuch a ſight of God as Moſes and others got of old, then know, that what they got, comes far ſhort of what you have already when you ſee me; *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father's glory;* and not only ſo, but the glory of the Father in the moſt glorious manner that can be ſeen by mortal eyes.

8. In Chriſt we ſee the Father *orderly* and *regularly*. This is imported alſo in the text and context; that as there is no *coming to the Father, but by Chriſt;* nor *ſeeing of the Father, but in Chriſt:* ſo the goſpel-order of coming to God, is by Chriſt; and of ſeeing God, is in Chriſt. And here, indeed, is the true order and evangelical method of acceſs to God, when, by the Spirit, we are led to Chriſt, and by Chriſt to the Father; *Through him we have acceſs, by one Spirit, unto the Father*, Epheſ. ii. 18. Here is the true order of communion with God, the way in which God deſcends unto us, is the way in which we aſcend unto God. The Father ſent the Son into our nature; and the Son ſends the Spirit into our hearts, that, by the Spirit, we might aſcend to the Son; and by the Son to the Father. Here is the true order of all right worſhipping of God; it is a worſhipping of God in Chriſt, by the Holy Ghoſt. It is the ſame with the order of ſeeing God in the text, where the light of the Spirit being ſuppoſed, wherein alone we can ſee Chriſt, it follows, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* So much for the manner.

V. The *fifth* head propoſed, was, to offer ſome *grounds* or *reaſons* of the doctrine, ſhewing whence it is, that they that ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father. The reaſons of a doctrine being the great pillars which ſupport it, and the hinges on which it turns; therefore I muſt mention ſome of theſe for the confirmation of faith in this matter.

1. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father,* becauſe of the *oneneſs* that is betwixt them; as I ſhewed upon the firſt head. The true ground of our knowing the Father in the Son, is his unity in eſſence with the Father; ſo that though their perſonal properties

be

be diſtinct, yet the eſſence is the ſame in both, and the one is in the other; for thus the Lord Jeſus clears it in the following words, *How ſayeſt thou, Shew us the Father? Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?*

2. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father*, becauſe of the *agreement* that is betwixt them.——As they are *one*, ſo they *agree in one*; as it is ſaid of *the three that bear witneſs on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood*, 1 John v. 8,; ſo much more may it be ſaid of the *three that bear witneſs in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, that are one*, that they *agree in one*: and indeed their agreement in the work of our redemption is ſuch, that though the ſeveral perſons of the glorious Trinity have their diſtinct work, and œconomy therein, yet it is with ſuch a complicated harmony, that the adminiſtration of one cannot be ſeen without ſeeing that of the other. He that ſees, by the Spirit's ſhining on the word, what the Son hath done as Mediator, in the Father's name, and as the Father's Ambaſſador, cannot but ſee, in the ſame light, the Father as employing him in that embaſſy.

3. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father*, becauſe of the *relation* that is betwixt them. In his *natural* relation, as he is the *Son of God*, we ſee the firſt perſon of the glorious Trinity to be his Father by eternal generation. In his *œconomical* relation, as he is the *Sent of God*, we ſee God to be his Father by ſpecial election, unction, vocation, ordination, and exhibition unto the mediatorial work. Both theſe, I think, are joined together in that word, John i. 14. *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

4. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father*, becauſe of the *likeneſs* that is betwixt them. Not only as *God* was he in the *form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. ii. 6.; but alſo as *man*, though he came in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, yet he had

had alſo the likeneſs of his holy Father about him, being *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate from ſinners*, Heb. vii. 26. The pity, mercy, and compaſſion of his Father; the love, grace, and goodneſs of his Father, did, when on earth, and does now, in heaven, ſo appear in him, that whoever have a perfect underſtanding of Chriſt, will have a perfect underſtanding of the Father.

5. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father*, becauſe of the *liking* that is betwixt them. Not only a *likeneſs* but a *liking*. Such a liking hath Chriſt to the Father, that he declares it is his heart's *delight to do his Father's will*, Pſal. xl. 8. And if Chriſt's love be ſtamped, as it were, on the Father's heart, and the Father's love ſtamped on Chriſt's heart, he that hath ſeen Chriſt, muſt ſee the Father's love and delight. One of the capital letters of the Father's name often mentioned in ſcripture, is his *Love* to Chriſt as the Saviour of his people. His love to him, not only as his own Son, but as our Surety. Hence Chriſt, as Mediator, ſo frequently ſays to his Father, John xvii. *Thou haſt loved me; thou haſt loved me;* and again, *thou haſt loved me.* But why three times in the cloſe of that chapter? Why ſo oft does he repeat this in his interceſſory prayer? Why, becauſe as the Father loved him in his undertaking, from all eternity, before the foundation of the world; and loved him in his ſtate of humiliation here, and loves him now in his ſtate of exaltation, and will do ſo for ever; ſo the Father's love to them for whom Chriſt prays and intercedes, is founded, in all the diſplays of it, upon his love to him; and he hears him always on their behalf, becauſe he loves him; and loves them only in him. In him they were loved from eternity; in him, they are loved in time; and in him, they will be loved to eternity. His *loving-kindneſs will he not take away from them*, becauſe his loving-kindeſs he will not and cannot take away from him, Pſal. lxxxix. 33. It is a matter, therefore, of the greateſt moment unto us to know this great letter of the Father's name, which he repeats three times over, *Thou haſt loved me.* Now, if Chriſt bear this golden letter on the breaſt-plate of his medi-

mediation, and ſhews himſelf thus clothed with the robes of his Father's loving-kindneſs, then they that ſee him, muſt ſee the Father's favour to him, and to them in him, according to the meaſure of faith: and this is the very thing that he does, John xvii. 26. *I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou haſt loved me, may be in them, and I in them.* O matchleſs myſtery! They that have Chriſt in them, they have the Father's love that he bears to Chriſt in them. But again,

6. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father*, becauſe he is the *image* and *repreſentative* of the Father. I diſtinguiſh this from the likeneſs that is between the Father and him; for one may have a likeneſs to another, and yet not be ſuch an one's actual repreſentative, as Chriſt is of the Father, 2 Cor. iv. 4. Chriſt is *the image of the inviſible God*, Col. i. 15.; the *brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 3. In his divine perſon, abſolutely conſidered, he is the eſſential image of God, even the Father: but thus he is as inviſible as the Father; therefore, in his incarnation, he becomes the repreſentative image of God unto the church, that we may have *the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. It is true, the ſaints are ſaid to be *the image of God*, when they are renewed in a conformity to the nature and will of God; but great is the difference betwixt the image of God in *man*, and the image of God in *Chriſt*. The image of God in the believer, is like Cæſar's image in his coin: but the image of God in Chriſt, is like Cæſar's image in his ſon; his only ſon and repreſentative. Chriſt is the image of the *inviſible God*, but man is the image of the *viſible God*; that is, of Chriſt, Rom. viii. 29.; in whom is made viſible to us. Chriſt indeed, as God, is not only the *image of God*, but *the inviſible image of the inviſible God*; but as man he is the *viſible image of the inviſible God*. It is true he is out of ſight now, and we cannot ſee him with our bodily eyes; but as he was viſible on earth, and is viſible in heaven in our nature; ſo the only ſaving ſight of him that a ſinner can have, is by faith. Suppoſe it were poſſible for

for a ſinner on earth, to ſee Chriſt in heaven, merely with his bodily eyes, it would not be a ſaving ſight; but now, when, by faith, we ſee Chriſt as the repreſentative image of the Father, then we cannot but ſee the Father in him. He bears the image of all the Father's glorious excellencies; and, therefore, to ſee his glory, is to ſee his Father's glory alſo, and that for the following reaſon. Further,

7. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father*, becauſe he is *ſent* and *ſealed* of the Father for this very end, that he might repreſent, manifeſt, and declare the Father: hence, *No man hath ſeen God at any time, the only begotten Son, that is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*, John i. 18. *All things are delivered to me of my Father*, ſays Chriſt, Matt. xi. 27.; *and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.* He was ſealed and anointed for this very end: *The Spirit of the Lord God was upon him that he might bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.* And hence, *God, who, at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake, in times paſt, to the fathers by the prophets, hath, in theſe laſt days, ſpoken to us by his Son, who is the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 1, 2. Whatever Chriſt did, either by his preaching, working of miracles, or laying down his life, it was by the appointment of his Father, and to lead us to the Father. He is the way, the new and living conſecrated way to the Father. He, therefore, that ſees him as the way, does ſee the Father as the end to which the way leads by divine appointment.

8. *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father*, becauſe the *Spirit*, that *diſcovers and teſtifies of Chriſt*, is equally the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. The Spirit of the Son is the Spirit of the Father; and the Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of the Son; *When the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he ſhall teſtify of me*, John xv. 26.——He cannot, therefore, teſtify of the Son, without teſtifying of the Father. The Spirit of the Father teſtifying

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of the Son, cannot be without reference to the Father; nay, when he diſcovers Chriſt, and the things of Chriſt, he diſcovers, at the ſame time, in the ſame light, the Father, and the things of the Father; *He ſhall glorify me*, ſays Chriſt, *for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhew it unto you*, John xvi. 14, 15. Now, if it be aſked, what things of mine he will ſhew? The anſwer is, they are the things of the Father; for, *all things that the Father hath, are mine.* The things of Chriſt are the Father's, and the things of the Father are Chriſt's. The glory of Chriſt is the Father's glory; and the glory of the Father is Chriſt's glory. The fulneſs of Chriſt is the Father's fulneſs; and the fulneſs of the Father is Chriſt's fulneſs. Therefore, he that is the Spirit, both of the Father and of the Son, when he glorifies Chriſt, and ſhews the things of Chriſt, he glorifies the Father, and ſhews the things of the Father; conſequently, *He that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father.*

VI. The *ſixth* head propoſed, was, to draw ſome *inferences* from the whole for *application.* This doctrine is ſo vaſtly great and prolific, that it is not poſſible for me to overtake all the purpoſes that ly in the boſom of it, and are deducible from it. The ſpecial inferences I deſign, are for *information, trial, reproof, comfort,* and *exhortation.*

Firſt, For *information.* O how many truths ly in the boſom of this doctrine! That ſuch is the *oneneſs* betwixt Chriſt and the Father, *that he that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father.*——There are two great truths here that lead us into many other truths.

1. That there is an *oneneſs* betwixt Chriſt and the Father.

2. That he that hath *ſeen* Chriſt, *ſees* the Father.

1ſt, Is it ſo, that there is ſuch an *oneneſs* betwixt Chriſt and the Father as I have ſhewn? Hence we may learn the following leſſons.

1. Hence learn, that the *object of faith* is very *great* and *glorious*, far beyond what natural reaſon, or human underſtanding can fathom; therefore, our Lord

Jeſus here, as he makes his eſſential oneneſs with the Father the foundation of his aſſertion, *that they that ſee him, ſee the Father:* ſo he lays down this great myſtery, as abſolutely neceſſary to be believed, and apprehended by faith, though it cannot be comprehended by reaſon. Chriſt's queſtion to Philip hereupon, is a fundamental queſtion of the goſpel catechiſm: *Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* Without the faith of this, there is no right worſhipping of God; no right apprehenſion of one God in three perſons. This is no indifferent thing to be believed or not. Our eternal life depends upon it. God hath born witneſs to it from heaven, as I have already ſhewed.

2. From this *oneneſs* we may learn, that the doctrine of *Arianiſm* is *damnable blaſphemy*, that denies the ſupreme Deity of our Lord Jeſus, and his eſſential oneneſs with the Father. Many affronts have been offered to the crown, and dignity, and royal prerogatives of our Lord in theſe lands, ſince we firſt broke, and then burnt the Covenant of our God, and were aſhamed of our glory. But the ſpreading of Arianiſm now, in Britain and Ireland, is like a pulling up Reformation by the roots, and a ſaying, *We will not only pull off the jewels of the Mediator's crown, but we will take the crown itſelf, and caſt it into the mire.* If this error be ſubtilly maintained among us, pray that God may diſcover and deſtroy it, otherwiſe it will deſtroy the very foundation of our holy religion. That pernicious error ſtrikes directly againſt the doctrine of our Lord Jeſus here; for, if there be not an eſſential oneneſs betwixt him and his Father, then it is not true, that *he that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father.* If he be inferior to the Father in point of eſſence, ſelf-exiſtence, independency, or any other eſſential perfection, then we cannot ſee all the Father's glory in him *:

But

* When this Sermon was delivered, the Arian tenets were not only getting up their head, and overſpreadng the nation, but there was a proceſs commenced and depending before the ſupreme eccleſiaſtical court, againſt Mr Simſon, profeſſor of theology in the univerſity of Glaſgow, for teaching and propagating theſe tenets.—The kindly recep-

tion

But let Chriſt, who is truth itſelf, be true, and every man a liar. What I have ſaid refutes this abomination.

3. From this *oneneſs* betwixt the Father and the Son, you may learn the *danger of denying Chriſt.* To deny the Son is to deny the Father, 1 John ii. 23. *And he is Antichriſt that denies the Father and the Son*, verſe 22. And *who is a liar, but he that denies that Jeſus is the Chriſt?* To deny the unity of the ſame undivided eſſence betwixt the Father and him, is to deny him to be the true Meſſias; IMMANUEL, *God with us*, Iſaiah vii. 14. O the danger of deviating from the doctrine of Chriſt! *Whoſoever tranſgreſſeth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Chriſt, hath not God; he that abideth in the doctrine of Chriſt, he hath both the Father and the Son*, 2 John, ver. 9. Hence he that deviates from it hath neither. Why? becauſe of their undivided eſſence, notwithſtanding of their perſonal diſtinction.— It is not poſſible to deny the one and not the other.

4. Learn hence, how *fearfully Chriſt was humbled:* what! one with the Father, the Father's *fellow*, and *equal*, and yet a *babe*, a *ſervant*, a *ſufferer*, a *worm!* Pſalm xxii. Should an emperor become a fly; yea, ſhould all the glorious angels in heaven become one crawling inſect upon earth, it were not to be mentioned with this humiliation of Chriſt. Oh! how ſadly was the world miſtaken concerning Chriſt, when they took him up to be a mere man, the carpenter's ſon, and did not ſee him to be the eternal Son of God, and eſſentially one with the Father.

5. See here how *glorioufly adorned Chriſt is with all divine perfections*, and ſo how *infinitely valuable and efficacious all his mediatory actings are.* If he had not been God, equal with the Father, his active and paſſive obedience could not have profited us; for, they had not

tion the Arian ſentiments were meeting with, the many friends this propagator of them was, at this time, like to have, and in the iſſue really had, and the ſmall number that appeared courageouſly againſt them, no doubt, influenced our Author, both to obſerve more frequently, in his diſcourſes, the ſpreading of them, and to expreſs himſelf more zealouſly upon the head, juſtly dreading the diſmal conſequences thereof.

been dignified with infinite merit, value, and virtue.—But now, being one with the Father, his divine nature is the altar that ſanctifies the whole gift; therefore, his blood, is the *blood of God;* his righteouſneſs, the *righteouſneſs of God:* we may ſafely depend hereupon for peace with God, and acceptance to eternal life.

6. Here we may learn the *infinite ability of Chriſt,* to apply, by his power, what he purchaſed by his blood. His *oneneſs* with the Father declares, that as he was able to make all things out of nothing, and does ſtill *uphold all things by the word of his power;* ſo he is *able to ſave to the uttermoſt:* his arm, is the arm of God; his power, is the power of God. It is ſaid, *The ſon of man, even on earth, had power to forgive ſins,* Matth. ix. 6. The Phariſees had made the objection, *Who can forgive ſins but God?* Chriſt takes their own argument to prove that he was God, becauſe he could forgive ſins: and, indeed, to take away the guilt of ſin requires omnipotency; the guilt of ſin hath the whole ſtrength of God's law to back it; and God's law hath the whole ſtrength of his infinite juſtice to maintain it; therefore, there muſt be an infinite power to take away the guilt of ſin, even that power that can break the force of God's law, and ſatisfy the demands of infinite juſtice. The ſame power and ability alſo is requiſite to take away the power of ſin; for guilt and power are the two great attributes of ſin; infinite power only can deſtroy them. It is to ſome a known maxim, *Ejuſdem eſſe poteſtatis inſtruere et deſtruere.* "No leſs power is required to deſtroy the world than "there was to create it." In the firſt creation, there was ſomething made out of nothing; yet that *nothing* did not reſiſt: and if God ſhould annihilate the frame of heaven and earth, and reduce it to nothing again, it would ſuddenly ſink; there would be no reſiſtance. But to bring together things that are contrary; to do away ſin, and bring in grace, that are ſo oppoſite one to another, and meet one another with the utmoſt reſiſtance, requires an infinite power to effect it. Sin is

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not only an enemy, but *enmity againſt God:* and as the mind muſters up millions of objections againſt Chriſt, when he comes to deal with a ſinner; ſo the heart and affections oppoſe him, as it were, in battle array: *In the laſt days perilous times ſhall come; for men ſhall be lovers of themſelves*, 2 Tim. iii. 1,—4. There goes the captain of *ſelf-love*, after which follows the body of the army of luſts, *Covetous, boaſters, proud, blaſphemous, diſobedient, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, falſe accuſers, incontinent, fierce, deſpiſers of thoſe that are good; traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God*, &c. The *weapons of the warfare*, that can defeat this oppoſition, needs to be *mighty through God. Thy people ſhall be willing*, but when? *in the day of thy power:* this is ſaid to, and of our Lord Jeſus, Pſalm cx. 3.— Being one with the Father, ſee his infinite ability.

7. From this *oneneſs* betwixt the Father and the Son, we may learn, that *Chriſt was not alone in the work of redemption;* John xvi. 32. *I am not alone, becauſe the Father is with me.* How could he fail, or be diſcouraged, in his work? The power and preſence of the eternal God-head, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, was with him. O ſee and admire the joint concurrence of the Father with the Son, together with the Holy Ghoſt, in carrying on this great work of redemption? It was the pleaſure of the Father, the pleaſure of the Son, the pleaſure of the Holy Ghoſt, that this work ſhould be carried on and proſper.

8. Hence learn, how *glorious and ineffable is the love of the Father in giving Chriſt*, the ſame in ſubſtance with himſelf, to aſſume our nature, and die for our ſins: *He took not on him the nature of angels, but the ſeed of Abraham:* and the Father put the robe of our nature upon him; *A body haſt thou given me.* Behold, how he loves the nature of theſe whom he hath given to Chriſt, that though he hath them not all with him in heaven, yet he loves to have their picture, his Son in their nature, to ſee them in him, and love them in him. In the faith of this, O what ground of encouragement is there, and what foundation of confidence in coming to the Father

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in him! that our advocate is ſo near to the Father ſo nearly related to him, and yet ſo nearly related to us, one with the Father in nature; and yet one with us in nature alſo: *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh;* and great is the myſtery of divine love, in making him, that is one with himſelf, to be the way to himſelf. Surely, if you come to the Father by this way, you may be ſure you come with the Father's allowance; you may come boldly. Is there acceſs to Chriſt, and yet the Father inacceſſible that way! Nay, that is impoſſible, if you believe this *oneneſs* that *Chriſt is in the Father, and the Father in him.*

9. Hence learn the *neceſſity of divine revelation*, objective and ſubjective: the neceſſity of *ſcriptural* revelation; without which we had wandered in the dark without knowing Chriſt in his *oneneſs with the Father.* O bleſs God for the Bible, and for eyes to look upon it; and ſtudy to improve that privilege. See alſo the abſolute neceſſity of *ſpiritual* illumination and divine teaching, in order to our apprehending this divine myſtery of *Chriſt's oneneſs with the Father.* When Peter confeſſed this, by ſaying, *Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God*, Chriſt anſwers, *Bleſſed art thou, Simon Barjona; for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven*, Matth. xvi. 16, 17. Let us be humbled under a ſenſe of our ignorance of God and Chriſt, and cry for the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, and in this way.

10. Let us learn, from this *oneneſs* betwixt Chriſt and the Father, the *glorious excellency of Chriſt being one with the Father.* Is he not a glorious object of adoration? *The Lord our God is one Lord.* And, O believer, *He is thy Lord, worſhip thou him:* crying out with Thomas, *My Lord, and my God.* Being one with the Father, is he not a fit portion for your immortal ſouls? His riches are indeed unſearchable; for they are *all the fulneſs of the Godhead.* It was ſaid, *Who can count the duſt of Jacob?* but much more, who can tell the thouſand part of the believer's treaſure, that hath a right to ſay, *The Lord is the portion of my ſoul!* O immenſe and everlaſting portion! Being one with the Father, is he

not

not *the fountain of living waters;* the fountain of *all grace*, as well as the channel through which it runs? As *God* he is the fountain; as *man*, he is the mean of conveyance; that *out of his fulneſs we may receive grace for grace.*—Being one with the Father, is he not the fountain of authority equal with the Father? yea his law is his Father's law. They that ſin againſt him, ſin againſt the Father: the original authority of the law is not annulled by being put into Chriſt's hand. Are believers under leſs obligation to obedience to the law, as a rule, than before? No, by no means: ſee what gives authority and efficacy to the words of Chriſt, and what obliges us to obey him, otherwiſe we diſobey the Father alſo; *The word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's that ſent me*, John xiv. 24. And this he grounds upon the *oneneſs* betwixt the Father and him, in the preceding part of the chapter. Conſider therefore, man, woman, who it is that ſpeaks to you in the goſpel. Why is the neglect of his word ſo dangerous? It is the Father's word. Why is his voice ſo efficacious, and able to make the dead to hear and live? and why ſhould his word have weight with us, and be credited by us? O! it is the Father's word.—Being one with the Father, is he not a terrible enemy? How ſadly are unbelievers, and enemies to Chriſt, circumſtatiate, and how dreadful will their day be, when he ſhall ſay, *Bring forth theſe mine enemies, that would not that I ſhould reign over them, and cut them in pieces before me? O kiſs the Son leſt he be angry;* for, his anger is God's anger, his wrath is the Father's wrath. It is true, he does not appear now in this goſpel diſpenſation, cloathed with the robes of wrath, but rather in his robes of grace and mercy; *He is not come to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be ſaved:* but if this Saviour and ſalvation be neglected, he will put on his robes of fury, *And come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the goſpel:* and then his wrath will be ſeen to be the Father's wrath.—Being one with the Father, is he not a glorious, bleſſed, and amiable friend, whoſe friendſhip is worth

worth courting an intereſt in? How happily are they privileged that are intereſted in him, and united to him? What! to be his followers and favourites is a great matter; but, believers, you are more, being the body of Chriſt, and members in particular. O the dignity of union with Chriſt, what a great thing is this to be one with him who is *one with the Father!* John xiv. 20. O believer, you little know and conſider the honour of this relation: *But*, ſays Chriſt, *at that day ye ſhall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you.* O what is that to be wrapt up with Chriſt in the boſom of a Trinity, *Being one with the Father!* Is he not a ſtrong tower, and mighty ſhield! Is it poſſible that his church on earth can be totally ruined, let men and devils rage as they will? No, no: *The King of Zion is one with the Father.* Is it poſſible that the true believer can totally and finally periſh and fall away? No, it cannot be: his perſeverance is founded upon Chriſt's *oneneſs* with the Father: *There is no plucking them out of my hand, nor my Father's: I and my Father are one*, John x. 28, 29, 30.—In a word, being one with the Father, we need not think it ſtrange that ſuch glorious things are ſpoken of him: let this confirm our faith of all his mediatorial actings. Is it any wonder that he could *ſpoil principalities and powers, and triumph over them in his croſs, and bruiſe the head of the ſerpent?* Could not the power and wiſdom of heaven defeat and outwit the power and policy of hell? Is it any wonder that he could conquer death, and riſe from the dead, being the living and eternal God? Is it any wonder that he, who is one with the Father, could appeaſe the Father's wrath, and bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs, and that the Father is well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake?—Finally, being one with the Father, what a fit repreſentative is he of the Father's perſon and glory? and what a native poſition does the Lord Jeſus build upon this foundation of *his oneneſs with the Father?* namely, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

2*dly*, Is it ſo, *that he that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father?* then, in the light of this truth we may

ſee

ſee light clearly, and learn many other great leſſons.—As,

1. Do they that ſee Chriſt ſee the Father? Hence I infer, the *groſs darkneſs of our natural ſtate*, and the *groſs ignorance of God in all natural men*, ſo long as they are not enlightened in the knowledge of Chriſt. The mind of man is but a maſs of ignorance: *The underſtanding is darkened*, Eph. iv. 17, 18.; *Yea, darkneſs itſelf*, 1 John ii. 9, 11.; *Under the power of darkneſs*, Col. i. 13. *Partial* ignorance of Chriſt in believers, is the reaſon why they *know God but in part*: therefore Chriſt ſays to his diſciples here, *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father alſo*, ver. 7. *Total* ignorance of Chriſt in others, is the reaſon why they are *wholly ignorant* of God: therefore Chriſt ſpeaks in the ſame terms to the proud Phariſees, John viii. 19. *Ye neither know me, nor my Father; if you had known me, you would have known my Father alſo.* They that ſee not the glory of Chriſt, as the Father is repreſented in him, they *neither know God nor Chriſt*; they have neither the Father nor the Son: they know not *God*, becauſe they know not the holy perfections of *God's nature* in the principal way deſigned of infinite wiſdom for their manifeſtation: they know not *Chriſt*, becauſe *they ſee not the glory of God in him*: whatever other notions men may have of God, they are utterly ignorant of the heavenly myſtery; and *know not the wiſdom of God in a myſtery*. Again,

2. Hence we may infer, both the *greatneſs of the glory of God*, that is repreſented to us by ſuch an one as Chriſt, and the *greatneſs of the grace of God*, in providing ſuch a repreſentative, in whom we might ſee his glorious perfections, as his eternal Son, in our nature. To ſee the natural ſun ſhining in its ſtrength, would ſpoil the ſight of the ſtrongeſt eye; but to look on it through a vail is not offenſive. If God ſhould manifeſt himſelf in his naked glory, we would be dazzled and confounded; but to look to God in our nature, bringing down his glory to our eye, it invites us to behold it. *God manifeſted in the fleſh*: O Sirs, wonder and be amazed, that God will, in a manner, be

no more God, but take another nature, rather than that the brightneſs of his own glory ſhould undoe us! O how willing is he to reveal and make himſelf known to poor ſinners that had loſt ſight of him, in that he exhibites Chriſt, *the brightneſs of his glory*, to us, that in him we may ſee all his glory?

3. Do they who ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Hence learn the *precioufneſs of Chriſt*. As in his oneneſs with the Father, we may ſee his infinite glorious excellency in himſelf; ſo in his repreſenting the Father to us, we may ſee the infinite precioufneſs of Chriſt, and the excellency of the knowledge of him; and the neceſſity of this knowledge unto us; as he is the notable mirror, and looking-glaſs, wherein God is to be ſeen; ſuch a living mirror as can diſcover itſelf, and bring men to look unto it. O wonderful mirror! God in our nature repreſenting God in his nature and perfections, and ſaying, *Look to me, and be ſaved; for I am God, and there is none elſe!* O the precioufneſs of Chriſt, in whom all the beams of divine glory are contracted, that we may ſee and look upon them through the vail of his fleſh, becauſe we could not endure one glance of the immediate rays of divine glory! O precious Chriſt, as he is thus the only way to the Father! God could get glory to his juſtice in our deſtruction; but, behold his wonderful love, in laying his Son as a bridge betwixt him and us, that we might return to God upon him: And, O the wonderful love of Chriſt, that he was content to ſtoop ſo low! May not all the creation of God wonder at this? Angels are wondering; and what are we doing that are more concerned than they? O precious Chriſt, as he is the only meeting-place where God meets with us, and we with him! In him we ſee God, and God ſees us; we cannot ſee God ſavingly but in him; and God cannot look on us favourably but in him; for, he is the temple where God dwells, and manifeſts his glory. Where can we meet with God, but in a place where alone we can ſee God? O precious Chriſt, in reſpect of the glory and honour that the Father hath given him as Mediator!

As

As he is the *Son* of God, *the Father, who hath life in himſelf, have given to him to have life in himſelf*, John v. 26. As he is the *Sent* of God, *all power in heaven and earth is given unto him*; and particularly he is crowned with this glory and honour, of being the *viſible image of the inviſible God*, and of all the divine glory. O the preciouſneſs of Chriſt, when ſuch beauty is in him? It is a promiſe of the New-Teſtament days, *Thine eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty.* What is this beauty of king JESUS, but that God is in him, and all his glory to be ſeen in him? God is ſaid, under the law, to have dwelt *in thick darkneſs*; but now, when the Son of God hath appeared in the fleſh, in the diſcharge of his office, the Sun of righteouſneſs hath ariſen in his ſtrength and beauty. God himſelf, as to his being and manner of his exiſtence in three diſtinct perſons, with all the glorious properties of his nature, is illuſtriouſly manifeſted to believers. Thus Chriſt is the great light of the world; *They that follow him ſhall not walk in darkneſs, but have the light of life*, John viii. 12. O precious Chriſt! in that hereupon *he is the deſire of all nations*, the deſire of all ſaints, the deſire of all ages! The ſaints of old, that did not enjoy the benefit of the New-Teſtament revelation, expreſs this deſire. See how David prayed for a diſcovery of this glory of God in Chriſt, though he could behold it only in types; *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee; to ſee thy power and thy glory, as I have ſeen thee in the ſanctuary*, Pſal. lxiii. 1, 2. There was in the ſanctuary an obſcure repreſentation of the glory of God in Chriſt; how much more ſhould we deſire and eſteem that view, which we may now have *with open face, though yet as in a glaſs!* 2 Cor. iii. 18.—— Whence is it that a hiding Chriſt is ſuch matter of lamentation to believers? Why, the reaſon is, becauſe when he hides himſelf, God is out of ſight; when he ſmiles, the Father ſmiles; when he appears, the Father appears; and, O! how can he be but precious to the believer, when ſuch a precious ſight is to be ſeen in him!

4. Do they who ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Hence learn the *excellency of the goſpel*, for there we ſee Chriſt. How highly dignified are we that enjoy goſpel ordinances, and ſacraments? In the goſpel, Chriſt is preſented to the ear; and when we hear him, then we hear the Father. In the ſacraments, he is preſented to our eye; and when we ſee him there, we ſee the Father. How ſad is the caſe of thoſe that want the goſpel! They want the glaſs where Chriſt is ſeen, and ſo are *without God*; and much more ſad is their caſe, that enjoy goſpel ordinances and ſacraments, and yet neglect the great ſalvation, by neglecting to look to Chriſt there exhibited, and are never concerned to get a ſaving ſight of Chriſt there! O how near does God come to them, yet they loſe a ſight of him! How great are the advantages of a clear goſpel diſpenſation? The more bright the glaſs is, the more may Chriſt be ſeen therein; and the more that Chriſt is ſeen, the more is the Father ſeen in him.—The goſpel is a revelation of Chriſt; and herein alſo the difference betwixt the *law* and the *goſpel* appears. The law, as a covenant, yields a terrible ſight of God out of Chriſt; but the goſpel affords a pleaſant ſight of God in Chriſt: *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*——Which alſo expoſes the malignity of a *legal ſpirit*, and a *legal ſtrain of doctrine*, by the means of which Chriſt is hid and kept out of ſight, and conſequently the Father alſo; or, if he be ſeen, it is not in Chriſt, but, as it were, in the law; and the law not being the *miniſtration of the Spirit* of light, life, and liberty, this is the reaſon why legal doctrine is ſo troubleſome to a goſpel believer; Gal. i. 7. *There are ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt*, namely, by their legal doctrine, which the apoſtle there ſpeaks of. Again,

5. Do they who ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Then hence learn, wherein the very *nature and eſſence of faith lies*, even in the beholding of the glory of God's wiſdom, power, holineſs, juſtice, and mercy, in the perſon and offices of Chriſt, as our Saviour and Surety. In the ignorance of this lies the formal nature of unbelief, 1 Cor. i. 23,—25. Not to ſee the *wiſdom of God*, and

and the *power of God*, and conſequeutly all the other properties of his nature in Chriſt, is to be an unbeliever. But to ſee the wiſdom, power, and other glorious attributes of the divine nature in Chriſt, with application, as our Saviour, and Surety, and ſo to ſee God glorifying his perfections thus, is to be a believer. Unbelievers are blinded, ſo as the *light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhines not into them;* but believers are ſeers, as the prophets of old were called; and they *ſee viſions*, as the prophet Joel expreſſes it, Joel ii. 18. What viſions? O! a beatific viſion indeed, to ſee Chriſt, and to ſee the Father in him! What a large field hath faith to travel thro'; broader than heaven and earth, *even all the fulneſs of God!* And what a ſure footing hath faith alſo? for when it fixes upon Chriſt, it fixes upon God in him. Faith looks on Chriſt as a friend and helper, and ſo it cannot but ſee the Father as a friend in him. What ſolid ground for the *aſſurance of faith* is here, while faith cannot look to Chriſt, but it muſt ſee the love and good-will of God in him?

6. Do they who ſee Chriſt ſee the Father? Hence learn, whence it is that the *great deſign of Satan*, from the beginning, hath been to *blind the eyes of men*, and fill their minds with prejudice, *that they may not behold this glory of God in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. And, indeed, this blindneſs and darkneſs is gradually cured in believers, by no leſs means than the almighty power of God; *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts, to give the light of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, verſe 6. And this in a conformity to that promiſe, Iſaiah lx. 1, 2. *Ariſe, ſhine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee: for, behold, the darkneſs ſhall cover the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people. But the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee.* But, why does the devil raiſe ſuch oppoſition to the goſpel? and why is he raiſing a ſmoke out of the bottomleſs pit at this day *, to darken that fundamental

* See the reaſon of this aſſertion briefly accounted for, p. 466, 467.

damental goſpel truth, the *eſſential oneneſs* betwixt the Father and the Son, but that people may not ſee the Father in the Son? Think not ſtrange, that the devil and his inſtruments are at ſuch pains to cloud and darken the truths of the goſpel, wherein Chriſt is exhibited to us.

7. Do they who ſee Chriſt ſee the Father? Hence learn, what a *happy place heaven is*, and what is the difference betwixt a *fiducial viſion here*, and a *beatifical viſion hereafter*. Heaven will be the place of the full viſion of Chriſt, and of the Father in him; but the difference is ſtated, 1 Cor. xiii 12. *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly*, ; or as it may be rendered, BY A GLASS, IN A RIDDLE, a *parable*, or *dark ſaying*; where our preſent ſight of Chriſt is ſpoken of with a double figurative limitation, namely, *through a glaſs in a riddle*: THROUGH A GLASS; that is, either a *looking glaſs*, which yields but a repreſentation of him; the ſhadow of Chriſt is drawn in the goſpel, and we have but a repreſentation of him there: or an *optic glaſs*, or a *proſpective*, that helps the ſight in beholding things at a diſtance; as men diſcover the ſtars through certain glaſſes, while the eye itſelf is not able to diſcern them: ſuch a glaſs is the goſpel, without which we can make no diſcovery of Chriſt at all. Again, the goſpel diſplays of him are but, as it were, IN A RIDDLE; a parable, or ſo many dark things, which our weak faith underſtands but imperfectly. Hence, Song ii. 9. Chriſt is ſaid *to ſtand behind our wall, to look forth at the windows, and ſhew himſelf through the latteſs*. There is a wall of mortality betwixt him and us, that muſt be demoliſhed before we can *ſee him as he is*; we ſee him now, as it were, thro' a glaſs window, through a latteſs; yet when he ſtands looking forth at the windows of ordinances, ſhewing and *flouriſhing himſelf*, as the word is, through the latteſs of the promiſe, how unſpeakably glorious does he appear? And if ſo, O what will it be to ſee him *face to face*, when walls, and windows, and latteſſes, and all will be broken down, ſo as there ſhall be no more need of nor uſe for theſe glaſſes and ordinances! Angels and ſaints above are ſo raviſhed with his glory, and ſatisfied with

with his likeneſs, that they cannot look upon another object. It is ſaid, Iſa. xxiv. 23. *The moon ſhall be confounded, and the ſun aſhamed, when the Lord of hoſts ſhall reign in mount Zion, and in Jeruſalem, and before his antients glorioufly.* O but precious Chriſt muſt have a fair face, when the ſun bluſhes and is aſhamed to ſhine before him! Though a child of God were in a hell of miſery and trouble all his lifetime in this world, yet the firſt blink of this fair IMMANUEL in heaven would make amends for all. We may preach this wonderful Lord while we live, but we will never outpreach him; we may praiſe him to eternity, but ſhall never outpraiſe him: *Bleſſed are they that dwell in his houſe, they will be ſtill praiſing him; yea, they will be like him, for they will ſee him as he is.*

8. Do they that ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Hence learn the *grand difference* betwixt the *wicked and the godly;* they differ like darkneſs and light, blindneſs, and ſight: ſometimes they wonder at one another as if they were monſters. The godly man wonders at the wicked, to ſee their carnal life and wicked temper.—— Oh! how can they laugh and be merry, when they are ready to drop into hell! The wicked alſo wonder at the ſaints, and that they *run not with them into the ſame exceſs of riot:* why, the one lives upon baſe, viſible, earthly things, the other upon inviſible glory, as *ſeeing him who is inviſible.* Give a carnal man the world at his will, he cares not though God's face be hid; he is in his element, as the fiſh in the water; his language is *Who will ſhew us any good:* a good bargain, and a flouriſhing trade? But the ſaint is of another temper; the language of his heart is, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us,* Pſal. iv. 6. Give him all the world, he cares not a ſtraw for it, if God hide his face. This makes the difference alſo betwixt a ſaint and himſelf; to-day he is full of joy, though he hath but a bare houſe, and bare cloaths, and a bare proſpect of earthly enjoyments; yea, and be ſadly haraſſed with trouble and reproaches; yet he ſings, and rejoices, and triumphs. At another time he is full of heavineſs, even though it ſhould be better with him in his outward worldly

worldly circumſtances, he goes ſighing and ſorrowing: why? the reaſon is, one day the Lord ſhines, and then he is full of joy; another day the *Lord hides his face* and then *he is troubled*: his heaven lies in ſeeing Chriſt's glory, in which he ſees the Father's glory alſo.

9. Do they that ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Hence learn, what an *honour it is to be conformed to the Son of God*, as it is ſaid, Rom. viii. 29. *Whom he did foreknow, them he did predeſtinate to be conform to the image of his Son.* Is it the honour of Chriſt, as Mediator, to be the repreſentative image of God, *in whom the glory of God is to be ſeen?* What an honour then is it for the ſaints to be conformed to the image of Chriſt? As Chriſt is in the *form of God*, ſo they are in the form of Chriſt, *having Chriſt formed in them*, Gal. iv. 19. And being renewed after his image, as the more we ſee Chriſt the more we ſee God; ſo the more of Chriſt we ſee about a man, the more of God we ſee in him: *This is the honour of all the ſaints*, according to the meaſure of their ſanctity.

10. Do they that ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Hence learn, what a *dangerous thing it is to ſlight Chriſt*, and *contemn him*, who is *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.* If any deſpiſe the picture, it is an argument of their deſpiſing the perſon repreſented by it: *They that deſpiſe Chriſt, deſpiſe the Father.* And many deſpiſe Chriſt that do not conſider that they are doing ſo; particularly when they deſpiſe his ſent ambaſſadors: *He that deſpiſes you*, ſays Chriſt, *deſpiſes me? he that deſpiſes me, deſpiſes him that ſent me.* See John xv. 23, 24. Why, who would be ſo mad, ſay you, as to ſlight Chriſt? Even all you that ſlight his counſels, calls, and warnings given you by his word; that ſlight his people; and ſlight his ordinances; that ſlight his worſhip, ſuch as prayer and praiſes, whether ſecret or ſocial, private or public, wherein Chriſt is honoured and enjoyed. In ſlighting theſe you ſlight Chriſt himſelf; and in ſo doing you deſpiſe the Father: for, you deſpiſe his repreſentative image; and I will aſſure you, God will retaliate this treatment, and pay you home

home in your own coin: *O Lord, when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their image*, Pſal. lxxiii. 20.

11. Do they that ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Hence learn, the *awfulneſs of the day of judgment that is approaching*. Though Chriſt is conſtitute to be the judge, Acts xvii. 31.; yet the Father will judge the world in him, and by him; *for God is judge himſelf*, Pſal. l. 6. Then will Chriſt be ſeen upon the throne of judgment; *Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him*, Rev. i. 7.; and when they ſee him, they will ſee the Father in him; they will ſee God in him. It is true, he will not then be God's repreſentative in the capacity of a Saviour to ſinners, as now he is, but as a righteous judge of ſinners and ſaints. A ſight of God in Chriſt will not then be a pleaſant ſight to the wicked; for, he will appear to them, not as a Redeemer, but a revenger: for, he *will appear in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the goſpel:* but to believers, who look for him, and to whom he hath appeared graciouſly, ſo as they have now ſeen him, and the Father in him, and who will then be all perfect ſaints, he *will appear glorioufly the ſecond time without ſin to their complete ſalvation*, Heb. ix. 28. How dreadfully awful will that day be to the wicked that ſhall ſee him, and ſee God in him no other way but as a conſuming fire! How joyfully awful alſo will it be to the ſaints, who ſhall ſee him then, and ſee the Father in him, as their *everlaſting joy*, and *exceeding great reward?*

12. Do they that ſee Chriſt, ſee the Father? Hence alſo learn the *great reaſon and foundation of many other truths;* ſuch as,

(1.) Why is it that a ſight of Chriſt hath ſuch *virtue*, and creates ſuch *bleſſed effects*, as we ſee in ſcripture ſpoken of it? Even becauſe they who *ſee him, ſee the Father.*—Why is the ſight of Chriſt ſo *aſtoniſhing?* becauſe then the *wiſdom of God in a myſtery* appears.—Why is the ſight of Chriſt ſo *humbling?* why, becauſe then God is ſeen in his *majeſty* and *mercy* both.—Why, is it ſuch a *ſtrengthening* thing, even becauſe then the *power of God* is diſcovered.—Why is a ſight

of Chriſt ſo *ſatisfying?* becauſe then the *grace of God* appears. The ſight is *quieting to the conſcience*, for then the *righteouſneſs of God*, in the remiſſion of ſin, is declared and manifeſted, Rom. iii. 25.—The ſight is ſweetly *filling* and *ſatiating*, for then the *all-ſufficiency* of God is diſcovered.—Why is a ſight of Chriſt ſo *heart-chearing*, that the believer can never get his heart up, when preſt with guilt, till he get a ſight of Chriſt, and then he gets eaſe to his mind, and not till then? why, becauſe when he *ſees Chriſt, he ſees the Father*; and he finds God is in him reconciled and well-pleaſed.—In a word, why is a ſight of Chriſt ſo *ſanctifying* and *transforming*, that as they that ſee him perfectly in heaven are like him? becauſe they *ſee him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. So they that even ſee him *through a glaſs darkly*, are more and more like him, and *changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.—Well then, they ſee the glory of a holy God in him, and the ſight affects the heart, both with a ſenſe of their diſconformity to him, and with a ſtrong deſire of conformity to him; yea, the Spirit darting in the rays of the Sun of righteouſneſs diſpels the darkneſs of ſin, and inforces the contrary light of holineſs upon the whole man gradually and powerfully, according to the meaſure of the manifeſtation and communication.

(2.) Why is it that ſuch *honour*, *worſhip*, and *adoration* is due to Chriſt? even becauſe he is the Father's repreſentative image as man, even as he is his eſſential image as God. It is groſs idolatry to worſhip God out of this image, or by any other image, either mental or real. Ah! ſhall the devil make men *worſhip the image of the beaſt?* Rev. xiii. 1,—8.; and ſhall not we for ever honour this ever-living, everlaſting image of our God? Why is it that what honour is done to Chriſt, is done to the Father, and what diſhonour is done to him, is done to the Father? John v. 23. Becauſe the Father hath ordered, *that all men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*; and declares, *he that honours not the Son, honours not the Father.* Why? even as they that ſee not Chriſt, ſee not the Father; and they that know not Chriſt, know not the

the Father; ſo they that do not honour Chriſt, do not honour the Father. They that diſobey Chriſt, diſobey the Father; they that diſpleaſe Chriſt, diſpleaſe the Father; they that believe in Chriſt, believe in the Father; therefore, ſays Chriſt, here in the context, *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me:* which intimates this, among other things, that though one may believe in God, in ſome reſpect, without believing in Chriſt, yet we cannot believe in Chriſt, without believing in God; for, *by him we believe in God*, 1 Peter i. 21. Again,

(3.) Why is it that the *Father honours them that ſerve and follow Chriſt?* John xii. 26. *If any man ſerve me, him will my Father honour.*——Why, they that ſerve Chriſt, ſerve the Father. Why does the Father love them that love Chriſt? John xiv. 23. Why, the lovers of Chriſt are the lovers of God; and they are but haters of the Father that are not lovers of the Son.

(4.) Why, is the *anointing ſaid to teach all things?* 1 John ii. 27. Why, when the Spirit makes known Chriſt, he makes known the Father; and ſurely they *know all things* neceſſary to be known; they know all who know him, who is *all in all.* Thus the meaneſt believer knows more than the wiſeſt philoſopher that ever was in the world, if he was ignorant of Chriſt.

(5.) Why is it that the *Father is employed in glorifying Chriſt in heaven*, and the *Spirit* ſent to *glorify Chriſt on earth?* See how the Father glorifies him in heaven, Phil. ii. 9, 10. *He became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs: wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name.* What is the reaſon? ſee it ver. 11. *It is to the glory of God the Father:* for when the *Son of man is glorified, God is glorified in him*, John xiii. 31.——See alſo how the Spirit is ſent to glorify him on earth, John xvi. 14. Why ſo? even becauſe when he is glorified, the Father is glorified in him, ver. 15. *All things that the Father hath are mine.* O Sirs, if the Spirit hath been ſent to glorify Chriſt among us to day, then the Father hath been glorified in the Son.

(6.) Why is it that the ſaints and children of God deſire ſometimes to be *diſſolved*, and to be *with Chriſt?* why, even that they may ſee him there, and the Father in him gloriouſly: for, if they that ſee him here, ſee the Father in him, how much more will all his own, and his Father's glory, then be manifeſted to their everlaſting contentment, and full ineffable conſolation through the ages of eternity! The ſight of Chriſt that the believer gets is of ſuch an attractive nature, that the heart affected with the glory of Chriſt, is juſt like the needle touched with a loadſtone; it is in conſtant motion till it fix on its proper point: ſo is the believer's heart in a continual motion towards Chriſt, though yet, perhaps, like the needle, in a weak tremulous manner, the ſoul ſighs, and ſobs, and pants, and grones, in reading, in hearing, in prayer, in meditation, yet ſtill preſſing forward till it come to its centre in heaven.

13. Hence learn, what reaſon MINISTERS have to *preach Chriſt;* what reaſon PEOPLE have to *learn Chriſt;* what reaſon SINNERS have to *receive Chriſt;* and what reaſon SAINTS have to *love Chriſt.* Why, they that preach Chriſt, learn the Father; they that come to Chriſt, come to the Father in him and by him; and they that love Chriſt, love the Father. They who do not preach Chriſt, let them buſk up, deck, and adorn their ſermons with all the flowers of rhetoric and oratory in the world, and with all the expreſſions of ſeeming reſpect to God imaginable, yet they caſt a cloud upon the glory of the Father, when they do not preach Chriſt. As *he that honours not the Son, honours not the Father that ſent him*, John v. 23.: ſo he that does not preach Chriſt, does not preach the Father. Little wonder then, that honeſt miniſters are always beating upon this ſtring: O! let none blame them for preaching Chriſt; for, he is both the ALPHA and OMEGA, the firſt and laſt letter and leſſon of our religion; *The author and finiſher of faith.*——We cannot preach the Father's mind and will, concerning any part of our ſalvation, without preaching Chriſt. Who can learn the Father's enlightening, juſtifying, ſanctifying

ing and ſaving grace, without learning Chriſt, as *made of God to us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption?* Who can learn repentance towards God, which is a turning from ſin to God, without learning, in order of nature before it, *Faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Acts xx. 21.? ſeeing there is no turning to God, but in Chriſt; no coming to the Father but by him. Repentance, then, toward God is the end; and faith, toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is the mean towards that end: and ſo, with reſpect to faith itſelf, there is no believing in God aright without believing alſo in Chriſt, *By whom we believe in God:* nor can there be any love to God, but in Chriſt; we are not lovers of the Father, if we be not lovers of Chriſt; and good reaſon have the ſaints to love Chriſt, becauſe they ſee his glory, and the Father's glory in him. *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

Uſe 2. The *ſecond* uſe might be by way of *trial* or *examination.* Have you got a ſaving ſight of Chriſt at this, or any ſuch occaſion? Why then, the great mark of it is, if you have *ſeen Chriſt*, you have *ſeen the Father:* if you have ſeen Chriſt's glory, you have ſeen the Father's glory in him; for, *He is the brightneſs of the Father's glory:* if you have ſeen Chriſt's perſon, you have ſeen *the expreſs image of his perſon:* if you have ſeen Chriſt, you have ſeen the Father in all theſe and the like reſpects that I mentioned in the doctrinal part. Hath the *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhined into your heart, to give you the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Chriſt?* Then you have ſeen Chriſt indeed, if you have thus got the light of the knowledge of the Father's glory in his face. It is poſſible, indeed, that you may have ſeen Chriſt, and yet not know that you have ſeen the Father, even though it be impoſſible to ſee Chriſt and not ſee the Father; for, Philip here, had ſeen Chriſt, and ſeen the Father in him alſo, as Chriſt declares, ver. 7. *Henceforth you know him, and have ſeen him.* Notwithſtanding this declaration of Chriſt, Philip's ſaying, *Lord, ſhew us the Father, and it ſufficeth*, intimates the weakneſs

neſs of his faith, the darkneſs of his view, and that he knew not that he had ſeen the Father; upon which Chriſt, having reproved him for his ignorance, ſaying, *Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip?* he again reſumes the doctrine he had delivered, verſe 7. where he had ſaid, *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father alſo:* and he reſumes it here yet more clearly and expreſly, ſaying, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father; how then ſayeſt thou, Shew us the Father?* If any believers here, who think they have ſeen Chriſt, be yet at a loſs to know if they have ſeen the Father, let them hearken to what Chriſt is here ſaying to them, as he did to Philip, *Have I been ſo long time with thee, and yet haſt thou not known me? He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* But are you ſtill in the dark, Philip? Do you not yet know, believer, that you have ſeen the Father in Chriſt, and would you have this queſtion further opened?

QUEST. *How ſhall I know, if I have ſeen* CHRIST *in ſuch a ſaving manner as to ſee the* FATHER *in him?*

For helping the weak believer in this matter: if he whoſe prerogative it is to ſhew us the Father, would ſend his Spirit to ſhine on a mark or two for clearing this, that in ſeeing Chriſt, you have ſeen the Father, there are two ways by which you may try it, namely, 1. By reflecting on the *object*. 2. By the *offspring* of this ſaving ſight.

1*ſt*, Take a review of the *object* of this ſight, namely, CHRIST, in whom the Father is ſeen. And if ever you have ſeen Chriſt, you may know you have ſeen the Father: for, there are certain relations wherein he ſtands to the Father, not only as he is his eternal Son, but alſo as he is our Saviour. He ſtands related to the Father, I ſay, in theſe reſpects ſo cloſly, that it is impoſſible to ſee him without ſeeing the Father. As he that ſees a ſon cannot but know, not only that there is a father, ſince the ſon is a *relative* that muſt have a father; but alſo, if the ſon be ſo like him, the very picture of the father, then he that ſees the ſon cannot but be ſaid to ſee the

the father; much more ſo it is here; Chriſt, the Son being not only the Father's picture, but, in reſpect of his Deity, being clothed with the very ſame eſſential perfections, the ſame individual attributes and excellencies. Such is his perſonal equality in power and glory, and eſſential oneneſs and ſameneſs in ſubſtance with the Father, that there is no ſeeing of him without ſeeing the Father. But more particularly, with a view to the relations wherein he ſtands to the Father, even as he is our Saviour.

1. If you have ſeen Chriſt, you have ſeen him to be the Father's *Choice; Behold mine Elect*, ſays the Father of him, Iſa. xlii. 1. Why, then you have ſeen the Father chooſing him from all eternity, to be a Saviour and Surety for loſt ſinners.

2. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Servant*, in this work of our redemption? *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold.* If ſo, then you have ſeen the Father in his *matchleſs love*, putting his ſervice in his hand, and *laying help upon One that is mighty to ſave.*

3. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Darling* and *Delight? Mine Elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth*, ſays the Father; then you have ſeen the Father taking pleaſure in him, as his faithful and righteous Servant in managing this work. And I will aſſure you, ſuch views of the Father, in Chriſt, are no ſmall thing.—Again,

4. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Ambaſſador*, and *as the Sent and Sealed of the Father*: and that *him hath God the Father ſealed!* Why then, to be ſure, you have ſeen (as imported in this) the Father ſending, ſealing, and clothing him with a commiſſion to this effect, *Of ſaving ſinners, of whom you are the chief.* There is a notable ſight of the Father. Again,

5. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Gift*: the *unſpeakable Gift of God, given for a Covenant of the people?* This imports a *ſight of the Father*, as giving him freely for that end, to be our complete ſalvation; and ſo *you have ſeen the Father in him.* Again,

6. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Treaſurer*, *In whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge*;

all

all the treaſures of divine fulneſs in him? Then you have ſeen the Father's fulneſs in him. And what better ſight of the Father can you have, than to ſee him in all his *fulneſs;* to ſee him in *Chriſt, in whom dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.* Again,

7. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Secretary*, ſent to reveal the heart, and mind, and will of the Father to you? Then you have ſeen the *Father's council in him*, yea, the *Father's thoughts;* even though, *as heaven is higher than the earth, ſo his thoughts are higher than our thoughts*, yet when you ſaw *Chriſt*, you ſaw his thoughts towards you to be *thoughts of good, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.* While unbelief prevailed, and a legal ſpirit, you judged he had ill thoughts and deſigns againſt you, and a mind to deſtroy you; but when, by faith, you ſaw Chriſt, then you ſaw he had better thoughts, and a mind to ſave you. And did you not win far forward, and admitted very near, to ſee the Father, when, in Chriſt, you ſaw his very mind, and thoughts, and counſel concerning you; How can you ſay then, if you ſaw Chriſt, that you did not ſee the Father? Again,

8. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Image* and *Repreſentative?* Then ſurely you have ſeen the Father repreſented by him, *Who is the image of the inviſible God; the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*; his *eſſential* image as God: and *repreſentative* image, as man. And hence,

9. Have you ſeen him as the Father's *Equal?* the *man that is my Fellow, ſays the Lord of hoſts, who thinks it no robbery to be equal with God?* Then you have ſeen the Father's *power* and *glory* in him; for, therein they are perſonally equal, and eſſentially one.

10. In a word, have you ſeen him, and the Father's *furniture* about him, qualifying him as Mediator for the great work of our redemption, both by price and power? Then you have ſeen the Father's *Spirit* in him, and reſting upon him, as a *Spirit of wiſdom and underſtanding, a Spirit of counſel and might, a Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord*, Iſa. xi. 2. *For he hath put his Spirit upon him, that he might bring forth judgment to the*

the Gentiles, Iſa. lxii. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me*, ſays Chriſt, *for he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to open the priſon doors to them that are bound.* Got you never an apprehenſion of Chriſt, as being *anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows*, and as having a ſuper-eminent unction of the *Spirit above meaſure?* If you have thus ſeen the Spirit of the Father in him, it is one of the greateſt ſights that can be ſeen; for, to ſee *the Father's Spirit in the Son*, is to ſee *a whole Trinity Father, Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, with one glance of the eye of faith.—Well then, can you ſay, believer, but that when you ſaw Chriſt in theſe reſpects I have mentioned, *you alſo have ſeen the Father?*——Try it then by the *object* of this ſight.

2*dly*, Take a view of the *fruit* and *offspring* of this *ſaving ſight*. As they that ſee Chriſt ſee the Father, and cannot but ſee the Father's wiſdom in providing him, the Father's love in beſtowing him, the Father's grace in accepting him as the Surety, and the Father's ſatisfaction with him and in him, for his doing and dying in our room and ſtead, according to the Father's will, and council of peace that was betwixt them both; ſo this ſight cannot but affect the hearts of all that have the happineſs to enjoy it. If a prince come to a poor man's houſe, how ſhall we know whether he be ſtill there? Though we ſee him not, we may know by his train, and theſe that attend; if we ſee his train, we know he is there: even ſo the believer may know whether Chriſt be revealed in him, and in his heart, though he be at preſent out of ſight, if his train be attending: Iſaiah *ſaw the Lord upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple*, Iſa. vi. 1. Now, it is poſſible the train may be ſeen, when the Lord himſelf is not ſo diſcernable. There is a train of *bleſſings* that attend a ſaving revelation of Chriſt, or a ſaving ſight of him, that you would try yourſelves by. I ſhall name a few of them; for, if *you have ſeen Chriſt, and the Father in him*, then the ſight was generative,

So as to regenerate you, and beget all graces and virtues in you, John i. 13, 14, 16. There believers are ſaid *to be born, not of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God:* not of their free will, but of God's free grace. Well, but by what means are they thus regenerate? It follows, *The Word was made fleſh, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* The great mean of their being begotten anew is, their *beholding the glory of the only begotten of the Father;* and, as it is by this ſight they are begotten, ſo by this all graces are begotten, as you ſee, by comparing verſes 14. and 16. together, *We beheld his glory,—full of grace and truth: and out of his fulneſs have we all received, and grace for grace.* A ſaving ſight of Chriſt then, and of the Father in him, hath a powerful generative quality.—Would you know, believer, when you was born again, or the firſt moment of your regeneration? It was that moment wherein you firſt got a view of the *glory of the only begotten of the Father;* and if you would try it by the fruits of it, the offspring is ſo numerous, that we cannot undertake to ſpeak of all. I ſhall mention ſome of the many things that this ſight begets.

1. This ſight begets *faith*, it uſhers in believing; *He that ſees the Son, and believes in him, hath everlaſting life*, John vi. 40. It is by beholding him, we believe in him; *Looking unto Jeſus, the Author and Finiſher of our faith*, Heb. xii. 2. There is a looking to him by ſpiritual underſtanding, in order to our looking to him by faith; a looking to Jeſus, the *object of faith;* and, in this way, we are made to find him the *Author of faith.* There is a looking to him *for faith*, and a looking to him *by faith.* Can you ſay, Alas! I could not believe, though give me a world, till he manifeſted his glory to me; and when I ſaw his glory, then I could not but believe that the firſt act of faith was begotten by the firſt view of Chriſt; and that all the after-acts of faith depended upon the further diſcoveries of Chriſt; *He manifeſted forth his glory, and his diſciples believed on him*, John ii. 11.

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2. This ſight begets *hope*, 1 Peter ii. 3. It is there declared, that *by the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, manifeſting himſelf particularly in Chriſt's reſurrection from the dead*, believers are ſaid to be *begotten again to a lively hope*. O believer, when once you beheld this glory of God in Chriſt, was not then your languiſhing deſpair turned to a lively hope? Was not your fears of hell and wrath, which you was convinced was your natural inheritance, as a child of wrath, and an heir of hell, was not this fear of hell and wrath, I ſay, in the day when you ſaw Chriſt, turned to *a hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away?*

3. This ſight begets *repentance* and *ſorrow for ſin*; Zech. xii. 10. *They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Was it poſſible, for you, O believer, to look upon this glorious Sun of righteouſneſs without a watering eye, or a mourning penitential heart? Did not the heart, that was harder than a flint, become ſofter than wax, melting before the warm fire of the love of God, manifeſted in Chriſt!

4. This ſight begets *love*; *Whom having not ſeen*, [*viz.* by ſenſe, but by faith,] *we love*, 1 Peter i. 8.— Love to his perſon, as being, the *brightneſs of the Father's glory*; love to his people, as the *excellent ones of the earth*; love to his ſtatutes, ſaying, *O that my ways were directed to keep thy ſtatutes*; love to his ordinances, and to the place where his honour dwells. Is it poſſible you could ſee him, and yet not love him in all reſpects?

3. This ſight begets *liberty*; for, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is*, [as a Spirit of revelation, diſcovering the glory of Chriſt,] *there is liberty*, 2 Cor. iii. 17.— O Sirs, did not the ſight of the glory of God, in Chriſt, enlarge your heart, and looſe your bonds, and ſet you at liberty from your fetters and fears; at liberty from the law and legal bondage? Got you not liberty to unboſom yourſelf unto the Lord; liberty to plead, and liberty to pray, and liberty to praiſe, and all the doors of your priſon caſt open?

6. This ſight begets *joy* and *ſatisfaction*; *In whom*, though

though now we ſee him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory, 1 Peter i. 8. *Abraham ſaw my day, and rejoiced*, ſays Chriſt; and *then were the diſciples glad when they ſaw the Lord.* This is ſweetly propheſied of, Iſaiah xxxv. 1, 2. *The wilderneſs and ſolitary places ſhall be glad, and the deſert ſhall rejoice and bloſſom as the roſe: it ſhall bloſſom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and ſinging*; why all this? It follows, *They ſhall ſee the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.* O believer, did not your heart leap within you, when you ſaw the glory of the Lord? It is true, people may have a kind of joy, in that which will not give ſolid ſatisfaction; but here is *full ſatisfaction*, as well as *fulneſs of joy.* A man may ſay, when he is higheſt in the comforts of this world, Ah! there is no ſolid permanent ſatisfaction here; there is a want; there is a want; death and judgment trip up the heels of all that comfort: but it is not ſo here; the man that hath ſeen the glory of the Lord, may ſay, Now, I can trample upon all worldly joy; now, I can triumph in the view of death, judgment, and eternity; *Thanks be to God, which always cauſes us to triumph in Chriſt. Now is my ſoul ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs.*

7. This ſight begets *longing*; yea, longing for more and more of the *knowledge of Chriſt*, and of the *glory of God* in him; *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, and that I will ſeek after, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord*, Pſalm xxvii. 4. So Paul, Phil. i. 8,—14. It begets a longing to be *above*, where the viſion will be full and uninterrupted; and a *deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt.* O to be for ever with the Lord! It begets a longing to be free of *ſin* and *unbelief*, and every thing that hinders the immediate viſion and enjoyment of the Lord.

8. This ſight begets *holineſs* and *conformity* to the object diſcovered; *Beholding his glory, we are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory*; and ſo thereby he becomes *all glorious within.* Notwithſtanding of the remainder of corruption, and the prevelence of it; yet there

there is something within that will have the last word, so as the devil cannot get his work finished in that heart. The devil is said to work *effectually in the wicked*: that is, says one, *He finishes his work*: but in the saints he cannot get that done; for, grace comes after, and overthrows that work some way or other. Thus the devil sifted Peter, and foiled him; but afterwards Peter wept out the devil's work upon Christ's looking upon him, and his looking to Christ. Indeed, a new sight of Christ gives always a new victory over sin, and makes the soul advance in holiness, purity, and conformity to the Lord Jesus; *Beholding his glory, full of grace and truth, we receive out of his fulness, grace for grace*, as the wax receives letter for letter from the seal. This sight of God in Christ, is not dry, barren speculation, that leaves you as proud and carnal, malicious, wicked, and worldly as ever, no; you may suspect it is not a saving sight, if it did not, in some measure, leave an impression of the holiness of God upon you.

9. This sight begets *humility, self-loathing*, and *abasement*; other knowledge puffs up, but this presses down the soul to nothing before the Lord, saying. *Now mine eyes see thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes*, Job xlii. 5. The same light that discovers the greatness of God, discovers the meanness of the creature; the holiness of God seen, discovers the vileness of the creature; the fulness of God being seen, then appears the emptiness of the creature, and the baseness thereof: hence the holiest of men, upon the discovery of the Lord, must cry out, *Behold, I am vile*, Isaiah vi. 5. Then is the soul *ashamed and confounded*, when the Lord is discovered as *pacified towards it*, Ezek. xvi. 63. O! did not the sight of the glory of God in Christ, believer, make the *haughtiness of man to fall*, and the *loftiness of man to be laid low!* The fairer that Christ is seen, the viler does the believer see himself; and then self-wisdom, self-righteousness, self-love, are dashed down to the ground, and covered with shame and blushing.

10. This sight begets *holy boldness* and *confidence*. Notwithstanding the humbling nature of this view; yet

yet it is emboldening alſo, leading the ſoul to ſay, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog;* but yet, be what I will, I muſt have a *crumb.* Now, that thou haſt let me know where my ſupply lies, I will truſt and confide in thee alone for it: *They that know thy name, will put their truſt in thee; for thou, Lord, haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee,* Pſalm ix. 10.

In a word, if you have ſeen Chriſt, and the Father in him, did not the ſight beget *peace of conſcience* before God! *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God;* and this flowing from the ſight and knowledge of God; for, *by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many,* ſays God. According to the meaſure of faith, was there never a *joy and peace in believing* that you found? —Did not the ſight beget *patience* under croſſes that you was compaſſed with? It is ſaid of Moſes, *He endured, as ſeeing him that is inviſible.*—Were not all worldly *troubles, trials,* and *reproaches* made eaſy to you, when the Spirit of God, and of glory was reſting on you? —Did not the ſight beget *zeal* for the glory of God, and for the good of the ſouls of others, and make your heart cry out, O that all the world would come and ſee this glory, and admire the King in his beauty?— Did not the ſight beget *ſtrength* and *fortitude,* ſo as *the joy of the Lord was your ſtrength;* and you could ſay, *I can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening me;* for now *he hath ſtrengthened me with ſtrength in my ſoul;* and made me to ſay, *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength?*—Did not the ſight beget a *chearful goſpel-walk,* according to that word, Pſal. lxxxix. 15, 16. *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound; they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Thou art the glory of their ſtrength; and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted?*—Did not the ſight beget *praiſe* and *adoration,* ſaying, *O! what ſhall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?*—Did it not beget *wonder* and *admiration,* ſaying, *What am I, and what is my Father's houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto: Is this the manner of man, O Lord; and what can David ſay more unto thee?*—Did not the ſight beget *contempt of the world,* and a *ſelling of your* ALL *for this pearl of great price?*

ſaying,

ſaying, *I count all but loſs and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt.* Could you not trample on the world as dung, when the glory of the Lord appeared to you? Was not Chriſt more precious to you than a thouſand worlds of gold? Hath the ſight you got of God, in Chriſt, ſuch a fair offspring as this? Then it looks like a ſaving ſight.

I ſhall add finally, Did not this ſight of the glory of God in Chriſt, O believer, beget in you an *indelible impreſſion of that glory* that time cannot utterly wear out, It is propheſied, Iſa. lx. 19. *The Lord ſhall be thy everlaſting light, and thy God thy glory.* This *light of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, is, in ſome reſpect, everlaſting; while the *candle of the wicked is put out* and the candle of the hypocrite put out. Hence, Heb. vi. 4.—Though *once enlightened, they may fall away;* the apprehenſion and impreſſion of all that common light may utterly fail: but it is not ſo here with the believer; *the Lord is his everlaſting light*, even though his Lord may, for a moment, *hide his face from him.*

Perhaps ſome believers may now be ſaying, Whatever be the fair offspring of this ſaving ſight of God in Chriſt, that you have been mentioning, though I ſometimes think, I have got that ſight you ſpeak of, and at certain times have found ſome of theſe fruits and offspring thereof, yet have I not now reaſon to ſuſpect, it is but a common light, like that of the hypocrite, and that I never got that ſaving ſight when I find, to my experience, that all the fruit and offspring thereof is now dead and gone, dead and buried, dead and out of ſight? For I think ſometimes not ſo much as the leaſt impreſſion thereof remains.

O believer, if you have ſeen Chriſt, and the Father in him, examine it over again, and you will find it otherwiſe than you ſuppoſe, and that there is a living impreſſion remains, whether it be lively or not: therefore, I charge you before God, believer, to be ingenuous in this matter; was there not ſomething in Chriſt you ſaw, that took ſuch impreſſion on you, that you have never to this day forgotten? It may be you have forgot-

forgotten many friends and acquaintances, that are dead and away; you have forgotten many ſermons that you heard in your lifetime: you have forgotten many words that paſt betwixt you and your neighbours ſome years ago; you have forgotten ſome viſits that certain friends made to you; but there was a viſit that Chriſt made to you at ſuch a time, there was ſome ſight that you got of him, and ſome word that you got from him, and that is a thing you can never forget to this day. I ſpeak either of the firſt ſight that ever you got of him, or of ſome following remarkable viſits that he made to you, in diſplaying his glory: for a believer may get a thouſand views of Chriſt in his lifetime, but there are ſome views that he gets, that if he were to live a thouſand years, he could never forget them. Have you not a freſh remembrance, believer, to this day, of ſuch a ſpot of ground where you ſaw his glory? Was not ſuch a place like a Bethel, a houſe of God? and ſuch another place like a Peniel, where you ſaw God in a manner face to face? Whatever cloudy days have intervened ſince that time, yet you can never forget it; for, ſo far as you can judge in the ſight of the heart-ſearching God, it carried all the marks of a ſaving manifeſtation along with it. Why then, will you ſay, that all the fruits and impreſſion of it are dead and gone? For there is a living remembrance of it in your heart to this day, and a living wiſh and deſire at the root of your heart, ſaying, O to ſee that glory of God again! What is the reaſon, that this can never wear out of your head and heart? Even becauſe it is an eternal and incorruptible thing; *The Lord is thy everlaſting light:* and you will carry this impreſſion into eternity with you; and heaven will perfect the viſion: *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*

Uſe 3. The *third* uſe might be for *conviction* to the wicked and ungodly; that is, to all unbelievers that never yet have ſeen Chriſt, and conſequently, never ſaw God the Father in him; and, like Gallio, *care for none of theſe things*, and that are not concerned with ſuch

ſuch ſpeculations. Why, man, have you no concern in this matter? Is it not of everlaſting moment, whether you got a ſaving ſight of Chriſt, yea, or not? Know you not, *that if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them?* 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. And that it is *life eternal, to know God in Chriſt*, and conſequently eternal death to want this ſight? Will you tell me, if a phyſician ſhould come into a chamber where there are two ſick perſons, and ſhould ſay, the one will die of that diſeaſe, and the other will recover; would they not think it their concern to enquire after this matter? Much more is this a concern above all ſuch concern. When I tell you that hear me, that one part of you are believers, that have ſeen the glory of God in Chriſt, and you ſhall live, and live for ever; the other part, and, alas! the greateſt part are unbelievers, that have never ſeen the *glory of God in the face of Chriſt*; and if you live and die in that caſe, you die for ever, and will ly eternally under his revenging wrath: and is all this a matter of moon-ſhine to you? If you ſee him not now, you ſhall never ſee him in mercy hereafter. This ſight of Chriſt, and of his Father in him, is no bare empty ſpeculation; nay, it is the very root and foundation of all practical godlineſs: there is no conformity to his image, without beholding of his glory. Many ſpeak of following the *example of Chriſt*, even as ſome write volumes of it, as if it were to be attained by a bare imitation of his actions; but this is impoſſible, without a view and intuition of his glory, which alone is accompanied with a transforming power, to *change us into the ſame image, from glory to glory.*—— What makes one half of the generation ſo groſly wicked, and another ſo madly ſuperſtitious, but the want of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Chriſt? Why is the throng of the nobility and gentry of our day, beſides the commonalty, running ſo faſt to the devil? And why are ceremonies, and ſuperſtitious human inventions in the worſhip of God, be-

come ſo faſhionable †? Why, people do not ſee the glory of God in Chriſt, in the glaſs of his own pure ordinances and inſtitutions; therefore they make uſe of painted glaſſes: they do not ſee the internal glory, therefore they turn to external pomp and forms: but, as the more paint is put upon the glaſs window the leſs light is conveyed through it; ſo, the more people pleaſe themſelves with a painted ceremonial worſhip, the leſs, in the righteous judgment of God, do they ſee of the glory of God; yea, the more do they run out of God's way, and *love darkneſs rather than light.* May the Lord pity a poor ignorant generation, that profeſs the knowledge of Chriſt, and yet know nothing of the *glory of God in the face of Chriſt.* But I ſhall not enlarge here.

Uſe 4. The *fourth* uſe might be for conſolation to believers that have ſeen Chriſt; for, *he that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father.* O believer, you have ſeen much that have ſeen Chriſt, you have ſeen his glory and his Father's glory too.——Here is comfort againſt the apprehenſion you have of your own *ignorance of God:* Oh! ſays the man that ſees God in Chriſt, *I am more brutiſh than any man; I have not the underſtanding of a man:* ſo fooliſh am I and ignorant, *I am as a beaſt before God.* Indeed they that ſee him beſt, are under moſt humbling impreſſions that they cannot ſee, and of the impoſſibility of ſeeing him, during the ſtate of ſin and mortality; this keeps the believer's heart in awe, and cauſes him to walk before God with holy fear and reverence, knowing how dangerous it is to think amiſs of God, and yet how difficult it is to think aright of him. However, believer, you that have got a ſaving ſight of Chriſt, you have ſeen farther than you are apt to think you have ſeen, though it is but a ſmall portion of God that at beſt we know; it may be, with Philip, when you ſaw Chriſt, you did not know that you ſaw the Father. There is

† Epiſcopacy, though reformed from, and abjured by our Covenants, was, at this time, in ſeveral places, meeting with encouragement: and approved by many of high rank.

more

more glory in the object of faith, than you are ready to take up; but the Lord Jesus is ready to teach you, and make you know better what you know. There is more knowledge and persuasion of the love and grace of God in Christ, in the act of faith, than the believer may be aware of upon reflection, till the Lord Jesus discover to him anew what his faith is, and let him know what he saw and discerned when he saw Christ; he lets you know, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.*—Again, O believers, here is comfort against all *troubles* and *trials* you can meet with in this valley of tears: let me say to you as Christ said, Matt. xiii. 16. *Blessed are your eyes, for they see.* You cannot be unhappy and miserable to whom the Lord hath manifested his glory, though you be a poor man, a plundered man, a persecuted man, a sick man or woman, or whatever else can be called misery about you: if you believe Christ, who is the truth, you are a blessed man, a blessed woman. Though you were sick, and should never see health; though you were weak, and should never see strength; though you were poor, and should never see wealth; though you were banished, and should never see your own country or friends; yea, though you were stark blind, and should never see the sun in the firmament; yet if you have seen Christ, and seen the Father in him, *blessed are your eyes, for they see.* All the blessedness in the world, and that ever mankind enjoyed from the creation, put all together, is not worthy to be compared with one glance that a believer hath of the glory of God in Christ. And it may be, there are some believers here of such standing, that they have got a thousand of these glances, since the Lord began to discover himself, and reveal his glory to them. For shame then, believer, be not discouraged with every trifle in the world; *your lines are fallen in pleasant places, and you have a goodly heritage.* Never look dejected any more; envy not the wicked any more; but rather pity them, and weep for them, whatever be their outward pomp and prosperity, you have infinitely greater treasure. *We have this treasure in earthen vessels*, saith the apostle; well, what trea-

ſure? even the manifeſtation of God's glory in Chriſt, that is here ſpoken of: therefore you may ſay, believer, though I have not worldly profit, nor pelf, nor money, nor honour, let the world have all, yet I have a good bargain. O believer, pity the world that know no better happineſs than good meat and brave clothes; that know no better enjoyment than cabaling, eating, drinking, dancing, roaring, dicing, carding, hunting, gaming. Alas! if they were not mad they could not be merry in that caſe, being *without God in the world.*—Here is comfort againſt *deſertion;* have you ſeen him once, you will ſee him again; though he *hide himſelf for a moment*, yet he is the *God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar, and vowed the vow unto him.*—Here is comfort againſt *death;* though you ſhould die poor and mean; yea, though you ſhould die diſtracted, yet having ſeen his glory, you ſhall ſee him in glory, and praiſe him for ever: your *eyes have ſeen his ſalvation;* and therefore though you know not in what circumſtances you ſhall die, or how ſoon you ſhall depart, yet you may well be content to die what death the Lord will, and how ſoon ſoever he pleaſes, ſaying, *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace: for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* And whenever death cloſes your bodily eyes, you ſhall ſee him *face to face.* ——Take home all the ſtrong conſolations that God allows you who have ſeen Chriſt.

Uſe 5. The *laſt* uſe ſhould be in a word of exhortation. And our exhortation ſhall conſiſt of two branches, 1. To thoſe who have never yet ſeen Chriſt, nor the Father in him. 2. To believers, who have already ſeen Chriſt.

1ſt, Our exhortation ſhall firſt be directed to *unbelievers.* Do they that ſee Chriſt ſee the Father? O then, you that never ſaw before, *Come and ſee; come and ſee this great ſight!*

[1.] For *motives* conſider, 1. The *excellency* of this ſight. 2. The *neceſſity* of this ſight.

1. Conſider the *excellency* of this ſight. To ſee all the great works of God is a great thing, but to ſee God

God himſelf, who is inviſible, in his own image and repreſentative, is an excellent ſight. O the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt, in whom we have the knowledge of the Father! The holy properties of the divine nature are not only repreſented to our faith in Chriſt as to their own eſſential glory, but as they are exerted for our ſalvation: for in him we ſee infinite wiſdom, power, juſtice, holineſs, and mercy exerting themſelves, in the contrivance, conſtitution and efficacious accompliſhment of the great work of our redemption and ſalvation. This gives, as to our view, an unſpeakable luſtre to the native amiableneſs of theſe divine attributes. As they are eternally reſident in the divine nature, and abſolutely the ſame with it, we cannot ſo comprehend them as to have any endearing, ſatiating view of their glory; but as they are exerted to our ſalvation, theſe beams of glory ſhine with unſpeakable raviſhment; *O the depths of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* Rom. xi. 33. Here is a great privilege, and a great myſtery both; a privilege to be valued, as it is a dawning of heaven; and a myſtery to be viewed with ſpiritual wiſdom; wiſdom from above is abſolutely neceſſary; for, fleſh and blood cannot reveal it. How blind were the greateſt philoſophers in compariſon with the meaneſt diſciple of Jeſus, that ſees this great ſight? But then,

2. Conſider the *neceſſity* of this ſight. There is no ſeeing of Chriſt above, if we get not a begun ſight and view of him here; yea, you cannot ſo much as deſire the glory of God in heaven, whatever you pretend, if you never ſaw the glory of Chriſt here. If a man pretend he is delighted with, and deſires greatly what he never ſaw, nor was ever repreſented to him, he does but dote upon his imagination. The pretended deſires of many to behold the glory of Chriſt in heaven, who have no view of it by faith while on earth, are nothing but ſelf-deceiving imaginations. Therefore, let none deceive; they that ſee not Chriſt here, ſhall never ſee him, nor the glory of God in him hereafter. Now, they that do not ſee the glory of Chriſt, have no grace; for all grace

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is begotten only by this ſight, as I have ſhewed already. *He that ſees the Son, and believes in him, hath everlaſting life;* but they that ſee not the Son are unbelievers and heirs of everlaſting death.

[2.] For *direction*, if you aſk, Where ſhall we ſee him? and how ſhall we ſee him?

1. If you aſk, WHERE *ſhall we ſee him?* God the Father hath given Chriſt to be the glaſs wherein you may ſee him: Chriſt hath given the goſpel to be the glaſs wherein you may ſee him; ſay not then, *Who will aſcend to heaven and bring Chriſt down; or deſcend to the deep, to bring him up that we may ſee him?* You may ſee him in this *word of faith that we preach.* O ſee him in that word, ver. 6. *I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.* If you take a view of him in that word, you will ſee the Father in him. If you ſee him as the *way*, you may ſee the Father in him leading you to himſelf; if you ſee him as the *truth*, you may ſee the Father in him, teaching you his mind and will; if you ſee him as the *life*, you may ſee the Father in him quickening you that are dead in ſins and treſpaſſes. If you ſee him in that word, *No man cometh to the Father, but by me*, you may ſee the Father in him, determining the neceſſity of coming to Chriſt by faith, in order to your attaining the enjoyment of God.—O ſee him in his ſweet *command*, lined with goſpel-grace; *Look to me, and be ſaved all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none elſe*, Iſa. xlv. 22. There he is to be ſeen, and his Father in him; his call is the Father's call; you ſee it is the call and command of him that is eſſentially one with the Father; *I am God, and there is none elſe.*—O come and ſee him in his ſweet *promiſes*, all lined with love; ſuch as that, Pſal. lxxii. 17. *Men ſhall be bleſt in him, and all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.* And again, *Surely ſhall one ſay, In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.* Men ſhall be bleſt in him; and ſurely, one ſhall ſay, in the Lord I have all. O what encouraging promiſes are here, even to them that think they cannot ſee him; they cannot look to him! for the very ſtrength to look to him,

him, and the eye to ſee him, is put in the promiſe they *ſhall be bleſt in him;* they ſhall ſay, *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength. They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn.* As the command makes it your duty, ſo the promiſe gives you encouragement to look to him in both; and to ſee him in a promiſe, by faith, is as ſafe a way of ſeeing him, as if you ſaw him in heaven; and better than if you ſaw him with your bodily eyes in the pulpit, and heard him preaching to you; for many ſaw him thus, that never got a ſaving ſight of him by faith.—O come and ſee him in his *purchaſe* that he hath made by his obedience unto death; a purchaſe of grace and glory for you, ſinner. But, ſay you, was it not for the elect only? It may be he did not make the purchaſe for me; that was not his deſign. My friends, we preach the doctrine of election in its own place, and declare, that the the *elect only ſhall obtain;* and that *as many as were ordained to eternal life ſhall believe:* but it were impertinent to bring it in upon the general call of the goſpel; it belongs ſo little to that purpoſe, that we could not mention it therein any other way, than to ward it off from that point, when the devil and the wicked unbelieving heart bring it in as an objection againſt, and an obſtruction to your ſeeing Chriſt with application to yourſelves. I only aſk therefore, whether is his ſecret counſel, or his open command your rule? Whether is his hidden purpoſe, or revealed promiſe to be your encouragement? What have you ado with his ſecret? you are not excluded in his word; and, why then will you exclude yourſelves? As I call you, therefore, to ſee him in his purchaſe that he hath made of grace and glory to you, ſinner, declared in his promiſe, that he is come to ſave ſinners: ſo I would warn you to beware of a trick of the devil and unbelief here, in turning that to a diſcouragement of faith, which is really an encouragement thereof. Hath Chriſt ſaid, *All that the Father hath given me, ſhall come:* why then, come and ſee him, and then you will ſee the Father giving you to him from eternity. Would you deſire to get into the very heart of God, and read his electing love? You

may

may do it by opening this book of the goſpel-promiſe, and reading it with application to yourſelf; and there you may ſee it.—O come and ſee him in his *robes of grace* and *ſalvation*; ſee him in his garments rolled in blood: behold how *he comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah.* See him on a throne of grace inviting you to come to him, and kindly declaring, that it is his greateſt quarrel with you, that *you will not come to him that you might have life*, and ſalvation from all your ſins, and all the wrath that is entailed upon them. Are you afraid to look to him, thinking he hath a quarrel with you for your ſins? Nay, but know it, no ſin that ever you was guilty of is to be mentioned as the ground of his quarrel, but only for this one, that you will not come and look to him for ſalvation and deliverance from all ſin whatſoever. O ſee him then, and welcome him in his kindly offer, and ſay no more, where ſhall we ſee him? for he is here preſent dealing with you in this goſpel.

2. If you aſk, How *ſhall we ſee him, and the Father in him?* I gave many motives and directions alſo, with reference to the knowledge of Chriſt, on the doctrine raiſed from the former part of the text; therefore, I need enlarge the leſs here. I ſhall offer you theſe two or three *advices*, with reference to your ſeeing of Chriſt, in order to your ſeeing of the Father in him; or with reference to your getting a ſaving ſight of God in Chriſt.

(1.) Be convinced, that unleſs he *manifeſt himſelf*, you can by no means in the world ſee him. Even as all the candles and torches in the world cannot diſcover the ſun to you, when under a cloud, till it come forth itſelf: ſo all the means in the world cannot diſcover God in Chriſt to you till he manifeſt himſelf; *I will manifeſt myſelf*, John xiv. 21. It is his prerogative to do it when he pleaſes; therefore, give him the glory of his ſovereignty, ſaying, Lord I cannot ſee thee; and all the world cannot let me ſee thee; but O manifeſt thyſelf to me. Be convinced that you cannot poſſibly ſee him, till he open your eyes and ſhew himſelf.

(2.) Be

(2.) Be convinced of the *neceſſity* of a *powerful regeneration*, ere you can ſee God; *Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God*, John iii. 3.; and a God in Chriſt is the chief thing, if not the only thing in that kingdom. The eyes of fleſh and blood cannot ſee this great ſight: theſe eyes of fleſh may ſee the natural ſun; but you muſt have other eyes to behold the Sun of righteouſneſs, otherwiſe though his glory be ſhining about you, your blindneſs and darkneſs comprehends him not. Therefore,

(3.) Be convinced of your own *groſs darkneſs* and *ignorance of God*. A conceit of your own knowledge, and high eſteem of yourſelf, and your own wiſdom, will both be an evidence that you know nothing as you ought to know; and alſo be a hinderance of your knowing and ſeeing the Lord: therefore you muſt *become a fool that you may be wiſe. For judgment am I come into this world*, ſays Chriſt, *that they which ſee not might ſee, and that they which ſee might be made blind*, John ix. 39.

(4.) Be convinced, that it is your *ſin* and *miſery* both, that you *do not*, and *cannot ſee this glory of God in Chriſt*.—It is your *ſin*, your leading ſin, and mother of all your other ſins: for herein lies the formal nature of unbelief, that you do not, you cannot, you will not look to Chriſt and be ſaved.—And it is your *miſery*: for, while unbelief reigns, you are under the power of the devil, hiding this light from you; *And, if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them*, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. This darkneſs and blindneſs is the ſtrength of the devil's kingdom.——Whenever light ſhines into the heart, his power is broken: but darkneſs and ignorance is the chain wherein he leads you to the place of utter darkneſs, to which you will be ſentenced with him, if that chain be not looſed in time. What will be the ſentence of the great Judge? will he give one to the devil, and another to wicked men? No: he will make one to ſerve them both; *Go, you curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil*: you joined with the devil in loving darkneſs, and therefore

depart with him! Oh! be convinced, poor ſoul, that the devil is cutting your throat in the dark; and that it is both your ſin and miſery that you do not ſee.

(5.) Be convinced, that there is a promiſe of *divine illumination* left to you to rely on; *They ſhall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me: no man can come except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him,* John vi. 44. Cry, therefore, for the promiſed teaching, the promiſed drawing; and ſeeing his powerful drawing is juſt his effectual teaching, O cry for the powerful promiſed illumination of his holy Spirit in the knowledge of Chriſt, in whom alone you can know the Father: be reſtleſs in the uſe of all appointed means, till the Spirit be ſent for this end. It is his ſweet counſel to you, that you *buy of him eye-ſalve that you may ſee.* Beg his enlightening Spirit: the Spirit is both the promiſe of the Father and of the Son; *I ſend the promiſe of my Father upon you; but tarry at Jeruſalem till you be endued with power from on high,* Luke xxiv. 49. Stay about his hand, in the uſe of ordinances of his inſtitution, till the promiſed Spirit be poured out; and *when he comes,* ſays Chriſt, *he ſhall teſtify of me, he ſhall glorify me,* John xv. 26. and xvi. 14. Plead the promiſe that is left to you of this powerful illumination.

(6.) Be convinced, that however unable and unfit you are for yielding to his call, yet it is both your *indiſpenſible* duty to ſee and behold this glorious object Chriſt, in whom you will ſee the Father; and your *preſent* duty to eſſay it with a view to his enabling grace. O Sirs, is not the Father calling you to look to his Son? ſaying, *Behold my ſervant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth,* Iſa. lxii. 1. And is not the Son calling you to look to him and be ſaved? *Behold me, behold me,* Iſa. lxv. 1. And does not the *Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come?* Rev. xxii. 17.— Is a whole glorious Trinity crying to you, Come and ſee; come and ſee the Son, and ſee the Father in him? Why then, unleſs you dare ſay, it is your duty to trample under foot the authority of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, to look to Jeſus is your indiſpenſible duty. And ſince he is dealing with you this moment,

ment, it is your preſent duty: *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation:* now he is ſaying, *Behold me, behold me.* Now you may ſee him in mercy; and if the opportunity be ſlighted, you may never get another occaſion to ſee him, till you ſee him in wrath, *coming in the clouds of heaven*, and *coming in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God*, becauſe of their not obeying the goſpel-call of ſeeing God now in the face of Chriſt. O ſinner, then he will be ſeen upon a throne of judgment; a dreadful ſight to his enemies! But now he is to be ſeen upon a throne of mercy and grace, calling ſinners and enemies to be reconciled to him, and to ſee the Father reconciled in him, that ſo you may find your juſtifier; for now, *Chriſt is ſet forth of God to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs, for the remiſſion of ſin, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of them that believe in Jeſus*, Rom. iii. 25, 26.—— O Sirs, ſee and behold him then, as the propitiation and atonement; and there take reſt to your guilty ſoul; and ſee the Father in him well-pleaſed and ſatisfied. O ſee and behold him as the true Jacob's ladder, reaching between heaven and earth, that you may aſcend by, and ſee the Father at the top of the ladder, with open arms ready to embrace all comers, and you among the reſt. O ſee and behold him as the helper, ſince you cannot aſcend the ladder, or get up of yourſelf; and ſee the Father conſtituting him to be the helper, ſaying, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty.* Behold this mighty helper ſtanding in the Father's name, at the foot of the ladder, ſaying, Man, woman, would you gladly be up? would you have my help? There is my helping hand, take hold of it; *Take hold of my ſtrength*, Iſa. xxii. 5.

But, ſay you, he muſt take hold of me, and draw me up, otherwiſe I cannot take hold of him. Well ſaid, man; therefore, ſee him as the *author and finiſher*, as well as the *object of faith*; and ſee him as the *all of your ſalvation*, and the Father making him ſo; for, *he is made of God unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and complete redemption.* If you think you can do any thing without him, you are not worthy of

him; and you go croſs to this revelation made of him. But if you can do nothing, and have nothing at all, and would have one to do all for you, and to be all to you; then ſee him, and take him as God all-ſufficient, to *do all your works in you and for you;* and to be your all for grace and glory: and thus to ſee him, is to ſee the Father and all his fulneſs in him; and thus to take him into your heart, is to take him indeed, and his Father's bleſſing with him.

O Sirs, ſhall we hope he hath come and diſcovered himſelf to any ſoul here in this offer? O! *bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,* and lets himſelf be ſeen; for, *he that hath ſeen Chriſt, hath ſeen the Father.*

2*dly*, I ſhould now cloſe with a word of exhortation to *believers* that have ſeen Chriſt. *Have they that have ſeen Chriſt, ſeen the Father*, in regard of the oneneſs between the Father and him? Have you ſeen this great ſight? Then I exhort you to prove it, and improve it.

[1.] *Prove* it: How do you prove, believer, that you have *ſeen Chriſt*, and the *Father in him?* May I aſk you, as the Phariſees who once aſked the man whoſe eyes Chriſt opened, John ix. 15. *How did you receive your ſight?* Why, ſays the man, *he put clay upon mine eyes, and I waſhed, and do ſee.* Can you ſay in alluſion to this, whatever was the clay veſſel, the poor, contemptible, and unlikely mean the Lord made uſe of, yet he put to his inviſible hand, and led me to the pool of Siloam; I mean, to the blood of Shiloh, the *Sent of God;* and no ſooner did I, through grace, eſſay to waſh there, but I ſaw; I ſaw the Son of God as the Saviour and Surety; I ſaw the face and favour of God in him; can you ſay, *One thing I know, whereas once I was blind, now I ſee?* I ſee a glory in him that darkens the glory of ſun, moon, and ſtars; I ſee a beauty in him, that eclipſes the beauty of all the world, and makes it ſeem but traſh to me; I ſee an excellency in him, *that makes me count all but loſs and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of him.* Though I ſee that I am blind, and cannot ſee, yet I ſee what ſome time a day I ſaw not. Can you not ſay, that the ſight you got of Chriſt, at leaſt in the day of believing, did diſpel your darkneſs, and diſſipate the groſs miſts

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of ignorance, and make them fly away as dark clouds before the riſing ſun? Did not the ſight break the power of your enmity, and make you, like Paul on his way to Damaſcus, when he ſaw Chriſt, drop the rebellious arms, and fall down before the Lord, ſaying, *What wilt thou have me to do?* Did not the ſight daſh unbelief out of countenance on that day, and with holy ſhame for your harſh thoughts of Chriſt, and make you with Thomas, after his unbelieving jealouſy, to cry out, *My Lord, and my God?* Did not the ſight looſe your heart from all your luſts and idols, and make you to ſay with Ephraim, *What have I to do any more with idols?* O believer, was it not a wonderful ſight, and a marvellous light? was it not a heart-piercing, a ſoul-humbling, a faith-ſtrengthening, and joy-exciting ſight; the moſt deſirable ſight out of heaven?

Again, if you aſk, how ſhall I prove, that I have *ſeen the Father* in *ſeeing Chriſt?* Beſides what was formerly ſaid, you may enquire,

1. Have you ſeen the Father's *bleſſing* in him? We read of the Father's bleſſing him, Pſalm lxv. 2. He hath bleſſed him in all his offices as Mediator: and, as *God's bleſſing makes rich;* ſo, by virtue of the Father's bleſſing, he is, as Mediator, enriched with all communicative fulneſs, and ſtore for our ſupply; and never would we have been bleſſed, if God had not bleſſed Chriſt, and *in him bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places*, Eph. i. 3. The queſtion then is, have you beheld Chriſt as the bleſſing of the Father? Then, of conſequence, you have ſeen the Father bleſſing him. It is a great ſight of the Father, to ſee the Father's bleſſing on Chriſt, and in Chriſt upon you. Many ſpeak of God's bleſſing, that never ſaw how his bleſſing comes, and on whom it principally deſcends: for, Chriſt is made of God a public bleſſing.

OBJECT. How is Chriſt made a bleſſing, when it is ſaid, *God made him to be ſin for us*, 2 Corinth. v. 21. *And made him a curſe for us*, Gal. iii. 13.?

Why, man, for this very end was he made *ſin* and a *curſe*, that he might be made a *bleſſing*. He was made ſin by imputation; ſin was imputed to him, that it might not be imputed to us; and the curſe fell upon

pon him, that it might not light upon us; and God, in the very act of making him to be ſin for us, and a curſe for us, in doing ſo, he made him a bleſſing to us, and bleſſed him to be a ſacrifice for ſin, and to bear away the curſe, and bring back the bleſſing.—Now, this mark excludes all who never ſaw themſelves to be, by nature, under the *curſe of God*, and never ſaw the goſpel-way, wherein the bleſſing of God comes to any ſinner, *viz.* through Chriſt; for, all that are bleſſed of God, are bleſſed of him, in Chriſt; *Men ſhall be bleſſed in him:* and to be bleſſed in him, ſuppoſes that he is firſt bleſt, and then men in him. However, they who have ſeen Chriſt as the Father's bleſſing, have ſo far ſeen the Father. To ſee God out of Chriſt, and in the law, is to ſee him curſing us: and this is the ſight all Chriſtleſs ſinners will get of God, ſooner or or later; either mercifully here to their awakening, that they may flee from that curſe; or wrathfully hereafter, when they ſhall ly under it for ever. But to ſee God in the goſpel-glaſs, and in Chriſt, is to ſee him *bleſſing us with all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly places in Chriſt;* and this is the believer's ſight of God in Chriſt, or of the Father in the Son: *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

2. Have you ſeen the Father's *promiſe* in him? 2 Cor. i. 20. *All the promiſes of God are in him, yea;* none of the Father's promiſes are made out of him: and if we have ſeen Chriſt as the centre of the Father's promiſes, in whom they are all affirmed and confirmed by him, being in him, YEA, in point of affirmation; and AMEN in point of confirmation; then you have ſeen the Father as a promiſing God in him; and that you have no right to any promiſe, but by virtue of union to him; and as the the promiſe is firſt made to him, and in him to you; and as it comes running through the channel of his blood and righteouſneſs. Now, this mark excludes and ſhuts out all who have not ſeen themſelves to be heirs of all the *threatenings of the law*, by nature, and God to be a threatening God, ready to execute the law-threatening againſt them, becauſe of their ſin; and all that have not been brought to acquaintance with the promiſes of the goſpel, and ſeen them to be the pro-

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miſes of God in Chriſt; for they only that have ſeen this, have ſeen God in Chriſt: *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

3. Have you ſeen the Father's *work* in his hand? the Father's buſineſs committed to his management, according as he ſays, Luke ii. 49.; particularly the work and buſineſs of our redemption and ſalvation. This imports, and carries with it a ſight of the Father, as employing Chriſt in that great work. They that have ſeen Chriſt, as the Father's Agent in this affair, have ſeen the Father in him, which is indeed a great ſight; to ſee the Father intruſting him with ſuch a work, and Chriſt diſcharging his truſt in the Father's name.—— This mark excludes, and cuts off, all thoſe that never ſaw the *work of ſalvation* to be any other, but what themſelves are capable of, either by their own natural power, or ſome little divine aſſiſtance. Many declare themſelves ignorant of God, and under *the law of works*, by their groſs notions of ſalvation; thinking that God ſtill ſtands upon the old-covenant ground with them, calling them to work for life; and ſo they reckon, if they do their beſt, God will pity them; or, though they come ſhort, yet with ſome of God's help and aſſiſtance, their own doing will be ſufficient; not knowing that ſalvation work is God's work, and that God's work is put in Chriſt's hand, and that there is no work, pertaining to the law as a covenant, that belongs to us now at all, nor can poſſibly be performed by us; Chriſt's everlaſting righteouſneſs anſwers that completely. And for any other work that he works in his people, it is not for ſalvation, or to be ſaved, but a part of ſalvation, *when he works in them both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure:* thoſe whom God ſaves, he ſaves them to work, but not for them. Works of holineſs, are a part of the ſalvation to which we are ſaved; but we are not ſaved either *for* our works, or *by* them, or *according to* them. Not *for* them; Ezek. xxxvi. 32. *Not* FOR *your ſakes do I this, ſaith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be aſhamed and confounded for your own ways, O houſe of Iſrael.* Nor *by* them; Titus iii. 5. *Not* BY *works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but accordiug to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of*

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regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt. Nor *according to* them; 2 Tim. i. 9. *He hath ſaved us, and called us with an holy calling, not* ACCORDING TO *our work; but according to his own purpoſe and grace, which was given to us in Chriſt Jeſus before the world began.* The ſcripture then declares, we are not ſaved either by, or for, or according to our works; for though men are to be *judged* according to their works, yet not *ſaved* according to their works. The rule of *judgment*, and the rule of *ſalvation* are vaſtly different.—The rule of *judgment* will be the law: and therefore men will be judged according to their work, and according as they have a law-biding righteouſneſs, yea, or not. The wicked will not have it; and ſo will be adjudged to eternal death: believers will have it in Chriſt, even a righteouſneſs of merit and ſpirit, both for juſtification and ſanctification; and ſo will be adjudged to eternal life. Men will be thus judged according to their works. But the rule of *ſalvation* is not the law, but the goſpel, and the free grace of God in Chriſt; and therefore, though men will be judged according to their work, yet let none expect to be ſaved according to them, or by them, or for them. The works that will be available to ſalvation are not our works, or any thing either wrought in us, or done by us; but the work of Chriſt, his perfect obedience: *As by one man's diſobedience many were made ſinners, ſo by the obedience of one many ſhall be made righteous*, Rom. v. 19. Now, have you ſeen Chriſt's obedience to be the Father's work in his hand, and his righteouſneſs to be the righteouſneſs of God? Then you have ſeen God in him; God fulfilling his own law in him; God ſatisfying his own juſtice in him; and God bringing in everlaſting righteouſneſs in him.

4. If you would try if you have ſeen the Father in Chriſt, try if you have ſeen the Father's *wages* beſtowed on him. Chriſt, as Mediator, did not work without wages and a reward; nay, having *drunk of the brook in the way*, he was to *lift up his head. Ought not Chriſt to do and ſuffer theſe things, and then to enter into his glory*, Luke xxiv. 26. See the wages and reward given him, Phil. ii. 9. *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him,*

and

and given him a name above every name. Heaven then is to Chriſt, and to all that get into him, the reward of Chriſt's *obedience unto death, even the death of the croſs*; ſo it is alſo declared, Heb. xii. 2. Now, they that have ſeen the Father's wages beſtowed upon Chriſt, as Mediator, then they have ſeen the Father in him; or they have ſeen the Father rewarding him for his ſervice, and exalting him to his right-hand on the account of his work. Heaven is called the *recompence of reward* to Chriſt, it is a reward of debt; for, it is juſtly due to his obedience. But to believers in Chriſt, it is a reward of grace: becauſe to them it is the *gift of God*, through Chriſt.—Now, this mark excludes, and ſhuts out all thoſe that expect heaven and eternal life, as the *reward of any good deed done*, or to be done by them. This declares they never ſaw the glory of the Father in the Son, nor the Father conferring heaven and glory on Chriſt, as the reward of his everlaſting righteouſneſs. Mercenary workers, that expect proper wages for their work from God, are yet under the law, and ſo under the curſe of God.——In this manner many work all their days, and may work very earneſtly at a multitude of duties, and work their own ruin and damnation, and yet think they are ſafe, and never dream that they are under the curſe of God, notwithſtanding all they do. See Luke xiii. 24. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; for many ſhall ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.* Why that? Is it not ſaid, *Seek, and ye ſhall find?* Yea, but they ſhall ſeek to enter, *and ſhall not be able;* becauſe they ſeek in a legal way; not by faith, but, as it were, *by the works of the law.* And this is indeed one of the great things that makes the way ſtrait.

5. Try if you have ſeen Chriſt, ſo as to ſee the Father in him. Have you ſeen the Father *glorified* in him, as Chriſt ſays, John xiii. 31.? Have you ſeen his wiſdom glorified in contriving, his power in accompliſhing; and more of his wiſdom and power here than in the whole creation? Have you ſeen the holineſs of God, the juſtice of God, and the mercy and truth of God glorifying themſelves in him, and exerting themſelves in Chriſt unto ſalvation? Do you ſee

the wiſdom of God more glorified and glorious in Chriſt, than in contriving the ſun, moon, and ſtars? His power more glorified in Chriſt, than in making a world? His holineſs more in Chriſt's obedience, than it is by all the holineſs of men and angels to eternity? His juſtice more glorified in Chriſt's ſatisfaction, than in the puniſhment of all the damned in hell for ever? His mercy more glorified, and glorioufly diſplayed in Chriſt, and venting itſelf through his blood and merit, than if he had ſhewed mercy without exacting the debt of Surety, while he freely provides the Surety, and thereby provides both for his own honour, and our happineſs at once? And, do you ſee his truth and faithfulneſs more glorified in Chriſt than any other way? For, if Chriſt had not been ſet forth, God behoved to have glorified his truth, in executing the threatening of the law upon all the ſinners of Adam's family.—— But now he glorifies his truth, both as a threatening and promiſing God, towards all whom he ſaves in Chriſt, who both bears the ſhock of the threatening of the law, and fulfils the condition of the promiſes of the goſpel; and both by his obedience unto death. Have you ſeen this glory of God in Chriſt?—Surely this mark cuts off thouſands of blind ſouls, that cannot behold this glory of the Lord, whoſe minds *the god of this world hath blinded.*

6. Have you ſeen the Father *reconciled* in him? Here is an evidence of ſeeing the Father, if you have ſeen God reconciled in Chriſt. Here is a threefold reconciliation to be ſeen in Chriſt, 1. God reconciling himſelf with himſelf. 2. Reconciling himſelf to the world. 3. Reconciling the world to himſelf.

(1.) In Chriſt you will ſee God *reconciling himſelf with himſelf.* What do you mean by that, ſay you; I do not mean, as if God were ever at variance with himſelf; but upon man's fall, and the propoſal of man's recovery and ſalvation again, there was, in the apprehenſion of all creatures, men and angels, a ſeeming inconſiſtency betwixt ſome things in God, that ſpoke for man's ſalvation, and other things in God that ſpoke for man's damnation; but yet in Chriſt they are reconciled; particularly, there are ſome irreconcileable like

names,

names, attributes, words, and works of God, that are in Chriſt reconciled.

1. There are ſome irreconcileable like *names* of God, that in Chriſt you will ſee reconciled; for example, theſe names, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth; keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin; and yet that will by no means clear the guilty.* How will that name of *merciful and gracious to ſinners*, agree with that name, *he will by no means clear the guilty*, ſince all ſinners are guilty? Why, have you ſeen Chriſt to be the propitiation? then you can ſee theſe names reconciled: he will not ſhew mercy to the diſhonour of his juſtice; but juſtice hath got a ſatisfaction in Chriſt, therefore mercy will vent, not to the prejudice, but to the honour of juſtice.

2. There are ſome irreconcileable like *attributes* of God, that in Chriſt you will ſee reconciled; *Mercy and truth are met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other*, Pſalm lxxxv. 10. Men and angels could not contrive how *mercy and truth ſhould meet together;* how *righteouſneſs and peace ſhould kiſs each other* in the ſalvation of a ſinner; yet in Chriſt they harmoniouſly conſpire for our redemption, as I have formerly cleared upon the text*, therefore I inſiſt not.

3. There are ſome irreconcileable like *words* of God, that in Chriſt are reconciled, ſuch as Exod. xxiii. 7. where God ſays, *I will not juſtify the wicked*, and yet, Romans iv. 5. he is ſaid *to juſtify the ungodly*. In Chriſt you will ſee theſe words of God reconciled, as you may obſerve, Iſa. xlv. 25. *In him ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory;* juſtified in their ſins they cannot be, nor juſtified in themſelves, but in Chriſt they ſhall be juſtified.

4. There are ſome irreconcilable like *works* of God, that in Chriſt are reconciled; for example, his work of *rooting the law out of the heart*, and *writing the law in the hearts of his people*. Do you underſtand this, man? that the law as a covenant muſt be razed out of

* See Serm. XX. intitled, *The Harmony of the Divine Attributes diſplayed*, pag. 133, *&c.*

the heart. Chriſt is *made of God to us righteouſneſs*; and God, in this word, razes the foundation of the old covenant, and roots out all hope of life by the righteouſneſs of the law in our own perſons. Chriſt is alſo *made of God to us ſanctification*; and, in this work, he *writes the law in the heart*, as a rule of holineſs, and the tranſcript of the divine image, and ſo makes the perſon conformable to the law upon goſpel grounds, and in a goſpel manner. And this is the root of a goſpel-becoming converſation.——Now, have you ever ſeen any thing of this glory of the Father in the Son, or of God in Chriſt reconciling himſelf with himſelf, in all theſe things wherein he ſeemed to be at odds with himſelf? If you have never ſeen God reconciled in Chriſt, even in this ſenſe, you are but a ſtranger in Iſrael.

(2.) In Chriſt you will ſee God *reconciling himſelf to the world*. O! have you ever ſeen any thing of this glory, even the great and glorious God, in the perſon of his Son aſſuming our nature; and in that nature have you ever beheld God ſatisfying his own juſtice, fulfilling his own law, appeaſing his own wrath, quenching the flames of it with his own blood? *Awake, O ſword, againſt the man that is my fellow, ſays the Lord of hoſts.* And thus glorifying his own name, and laying a foundation for revenues of praiſe to be brought in to his crown by men and angels for ever. To ſee this glory by faith of divine operation, is to ſee the Father in the Son; where this is not ſeen neither Chriſt nor the Father is ſeen.

(3.) In Chriſt you will ſee God *reconciling the world to himſelf*; 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf, and not imputing their treſpaſſes to them.* This is the *word of reconciliation*; and it is further explained, verſe 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, that we might be the righteouſneſs of God in him.* How does God reconcile any ſinner in the world to himſelf? even by not imputing their treſpaſſes to them, but imputing their ſins to Chriſt, and imputing Chriſt's righteouſneſs to them, and diſcovering this by the goſpel, that he does thus reconcile the heart of the ſinner to God, and kill the natural enmity. The

faith of this mercy is the root of peace and reconciliation; *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God*: when God in Chriſt is ſeen, he is ſeen to be reconciled in him. And when I ſee God is reconciled to me, I cannot but be reconciled to God: his mighty love deſtroys the mighty enmity that was in the heart; this ſight of God in Chriſt cannot be without ſome perſuaſion and confidence, and particular application: for hence comes that peace and ſatisfaction, upon a ſight of Chriſt, and of God as reconciled in him. If faith had no particular aſſurance or perſuaſion of divine favour to the ſoul in it, the man could have no peace nor pleaſure: but ſo much hope, peace, and joy in believing that a man hath, ſo much aſſurance is at the root of it; I mean, the *aſſurance of faith* founded upon the word of God. It is ſaid of the forgiven woman, *She loved much, becauſe much was forgiven her.* They that have the faith of the forgiveneſs of their ſins, and that much is forgiven them, will love much: they that have little faith of forgiveneſs, or think little is forgiven them, will love but little, and are hardly reconciled at all to God. They that have no faith of forgiveneſs, and believe not that any ſin is forgiven them, they will love none at all, they are not reconciled at all to God. Indeed it is impoſſible for a man that hath no faith of God's forgiveneſs, to love God: for he believes that God is his enemy, imputing ſin and guilt to him unto condemnation; that man cannot but hate God. Indeed, many pretend to be lovers of God, that yet have no true love to him: but yet that pretended love of theirs is founded upon a falſe faith and ignorant fancy, that God loves them, and will not ſend them to hell for their ſins. But when that refuge of lies is deſtroyed, and that they ſee God in arms againſt them, as they will ſee it in hell, then will they hate him like the devil; and their enmity will be perfect and at its height; but, *true faith works true love to God.*——Thus you may *prove* whether you have ſeen this great ſight or not. And as you would prove it, ſo,

[2.] *Improve* it. O have you ſeen him, and the Father in him? O improve this privilege.

1. Im-

1. Improve it as an *evidence of your intereſt in him*: for, you may be ſure, that *this God is your God for ever and ever, and will be your guide even unto death.* There is no better evidence of it under the ſun than this, *that you have ſeen his glory in the face of Chriſt.* It is a ſolid mark of grace, and a ſweet ſpark of glory.

2. Improve it as an *antidote againſt all temptations.* When the devil, and the world, and the vanities of time, would draw away your hearts and eyes after them, you may ſay, "*O mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts*; I have ſeen Chriſt, and the Father in him; and therefore, with diſdain, I turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." Think ſhame, O believer, after this to feed your eyes with theſe baſe objects, that a blind and ſenſual world is taken up with.

3. Improve it as a *cordial againſt tribulations and difficulties*, whether temporal or ſpiritual. When *deep calls unto deep*, and *all his waves and billows paſs over you*; you may *remember him from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, and from the hill Mizar*; you may remember him from the place where he ſhewed you his glory, and that he is the *God of Bethel*: and will be for ever the ſame to you at your worſt times, that ever you ſaw him to be to you at your beſt times.

4. Improve it as a *confirmation of your experience*, and of his having *loved you with an everlaſting love*, and *drawn you with loving-kindneſs*. I ſeek no better experience than a *ſight of the glory of God in Chriſt*; and every new ſight is a new confirmation thereof: and when you ſaw him with an eye of faith, it is an argument he ſaw you with an eye of love and mercy. It may be, it was in a corner that you got a remarkable ſight of him, or under the ſhadow of an ordinance; but where-ever it was, now he is ſaying to you as to Nathanael, *When thou waſt under the fig-tree I ſaw thee*; when in ſuch a place I gave thee a kindly blink of my beauty, and laid my hand upon thy heart, and made it glow with holy fire from my altar. Something paſt betwixt you and me that none in the world knows of: *I ſaw thee.*——

Again,

5. Im-

5. Improve it as a *ſpur to all the duties of religion.* O! have you ſeen his glory, and do you not love that glorious object you ſaw? Shall not then the love of Chriſt conſtrain you to duty? This is goſpel-ſervice, goſpel-holineſs, when love makes you to read, and love makes you to pray, and love makes you meditate, and love makes you to wait on ordinances, and love influences your whole practice. Hath he manifeſted his glory to you? then he hath begun to glorify you; and, O does it not well become you to glorify him? *O let your light ſo ſhine before men, that others, ſeeing your good works, may glorify your Father that is in heaven.*—Again,

6. Improve it as an *encouragement to your fellow brethren;* you ought to meet together and encourage one another, ſaying, *Come hither all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my ſoul.* And as an *excitement to your graceleſs friends and neighbours,* you may excite them, by telling them now the Lord convinced you, enlightened you, and ſhewed you his glory, to the quickenining of your ſoul, and killing of your corruption; you may excite them not only by your talk, but by your walk: your converſation ſhould be ſuch as they may take notice of you, that you have been with Jeſus, and that you have ſeen him, and the glory of God in him, ſo as to *change you into the ſame image.* As you have ſeen God in Chriſt, ſo what an honour will it be to you, if any ſhall ſee God in you; if they ſee the grace of God, the love of God, the fear of God, and the image of God in you? It may be, they will long to ſee God as you have done; and may go and ſeek him with you as the daughters of Jeruſalem, Song vi. 1. upon the back of the ſpouſe's commending her Lord to them.—Again,

7. Improve it as an *argument to prove the ſupreme Deity of Chriſt,* and his *oneneſs with the Father:* that whenever you ſaw him, you ſaw the Father in him; you ſaw God in him; and all the glory of God in him; thus you have an antidote againſt damnable Arianiſm in your own boſom. Let your faith, therefore, be confirmed in his being *God over all, bleſſed for ever;* and let your zeal for his glory be thereupon ſtrengthened

and

and inflamed; your zeal for his precious goſpel-truths; your zeal for his royal prerogatives. In a word,

8. And *laſtly*, Improve it as a *ground of hope*, that you ſhall ſee him for ever face to face, becauſe now you have ſeen him, though it was *through a glaſs darkly*. Though grim death were ſtaring you in the face, you may ſay, The ſight of you, O death, ſhall not trouble me, for I have got a ſight of Chriſt; I have ſeen his glory, and the Father's glory in him; and this being eternal life to know God in him, death needs not be matter of grief and trouble, but matter of joy and triumph to me, ſince eternal life is begun. What is heaven, but the everlaſting viſion of the glory of God in the face of Chriſt, to *be for ever with the Lord*, and to *be like him*, by *ſeeing him as he is*; and ſeeing all the glorious attributes of God, in their brighteſt ſplendor, ſhining in his perſon! Then ſhall you have the happineſs of the perfect knowledge of that myſterious oneneſs betwixt Chriſt and the Father, which is the reaſon, why they that ſee him, ſee the Father; yea ſuch a cloſe view, as to found a perfect oneneſs alſo betwixt Chriſt and you. O wonderful word, John xiv. 21. *At that day you ſhall know, that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you?* O! who can expreſs the thouſand part of that happineſs which is imported in that word? For it ſays Chriſt will be in your arms, and you in Chriſt's arms, and Chriſt in the Father's arms; you will be in Chriſt's boſom, and Chriſt in the Father's boſom, where he lay from eternity; there will he and you ly together to eternity. O the near and immediate ſight and fruition of Chriſt, and the Father in him, that then you will have? O *rejoice in the hope of the glory of God*: it is heaven to ſee him, and to ſee the Father in him, this is the beſt ſight in all heaven, and your Lord declares, believer, that this heaven, this beatifical viſion is begun in you. *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.*

9 FE 65

The END *of* VOLUME SECOND.